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# THE BEST OF CONFUCIUS



Confucius

THE BEST OF  
*Confucius*

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE BY

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FIRST EDITION

# Foreword

THIS VOLUME contains a complete, unabridged translation of a Chinese canonical book which every generation of students in China learned by rote in this form at a very tender age for almost two thousand years. The oldest Chinese traditions recognize it as merely a selection of the sayings of Confucius and his early followers. But it is practically all that we have from the sage of the Chinese; other material is slight, largely apocryphal, and scattered in canonical and historical works which have in no way enjoyed the very wide circulation, study, and citation of the Lun yü, the Chinese title of this collection.

The reader can here acquaint himself with the aphorisms and moralizing stories which have served

as a guide to high moral life and courtesy in China. The virtues stressed are fundamental for China and the Far East generally; they are recognized by civilized man everywhere: the child's love for and duty toward parents (filial piety); love for and duty between brothers (fraternal piety); truthfulness in friendships; loyalty to superiors; the broad public interest and what is in general right (justice); codified forms of courteous and proper action (rites); The Right Way, the way of doing things recognized as good and correct; man at his very best with his animal instincts well controlled; the prince of men, the perfect gentleman.

Any reader interested in pronouncing the Chinese names "correctly" must consult the experts orally. This volume uses for transliteration the long-established Wade-Giles transcription. Any consonant or group of consonants followed by an apostrophe is to be pronounced approximately as in English; the apostrophe is merely indicative of this fact. The other consonants are roughly like the corresponding sonants in English: i.e., ch is approximately j, t is a d, ts is a dz; j and ih are approximately r. In Chinese personal names the surname or family name comes first: Yu Jo is Mr. Yu, Tuan-mu 'Tz'u is Mr. Tuan-mu, K'ung Ch'iu (Confucius) is Mr. K'ung; Chiang Kai-shek is Mr. Chiang and Mao



Tse-tung is Mr. Mao. The rest of the name corresponds to our first names.

The chapter titles are those used by the Chinese; they are derived from the initial statements of each chapter. The term "Master"—to be understood in the sense of the French *maître*—refers of course to Confucius; all sayings not attributed to others may be ascribed to him.

The illustrations have been taken with kind permission from Chinese books in the collection belonging to the Harvard-Yenching Institute at Harvard University.



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# Introduction

CHINA in the day of Confucius was a patriarchal society; it was a feudal society. The one and only concept of organization was paternalism and the large family; society did not sanction individual initiative. Persons at the very top were overseers only; those at the bottom could only be subjects. Between these two extremes, one was an overseer to all inferiors and a subject to all superiors. The highest respectable goal was service in the government. All that we know of education and the strivings of the time reveals the Chinese intent upon advancement in this hierarchy.

It is logical then that keen competition should have produced a corps of experts offering prepara-

tion for appointments. These teachers, revered as veritable parents, constituted a focal point for an oral tradition plus a certain amount of written legend or fact to be found in *The Poems* (shih) or *The Writings of Old* (shu). Stress was laid upon the cultivation of social and religious graces—both intimately intertwined—later formulated in a huge canon of detailed prescriptions known as *li* which, lacking a better all-inclusive term, we normally translate as rites, etiquette, or good manners. With it was also associated music. The result was that nothing in social and religious intercourse had to be left to last-minute individual inspiration. For one born and bred to this system life was as intricate, and as simplified, as diplomatic protocol.

In the matter of religion Confucius's contemporaries recognized a Heaven, overseer of all things here below, ghosts which were the spirits of the dead, and a multiplicity of divinities, demons, and fairies. His own interests, however, were directed chiefly to the development in his pupils of a high moral standard, not techniques, as the best preparation for the good life and, when possible, public service.

These social conditions had a political and legendary background. Confucius, a name resulting from the Latinization of K'ung fu-tzu, Master

K'ung, flourished in northern China around 500 B.C., a time when this small area of civilization was dotted with city-states. These states varied greatly in their geographical extents, but in every case we can be sure that each of them had one or more metropolitan centers surrounded by a wall. The rest of each state consisted of countryside marked sporadically with small villages. A man belonged by birth to one of these states, but there was normally the possibility of permanent or temporary emigration to other states, for there was a basic unity in culture and custom which enabled adjustment to local prejudice. Although numerous and widely scattered, and despite constant bickering which frequently led to armed conflict, the states recognized that they formed a confederation whose cohesion was directly proportional to the political and military power of a publicly recognized authority (the King or the Son of Heaven). In the days of Confucius Chinese recognized that they were living under their third public authority. Six hundred years before his day royal power had passed to a state called Chou. It was known that this dynasty had been preceded by one called Yin or Shang, and that there had been a first dynasty called Hsia. Legend even knew that the Hsia had been founded by Yü the Great, who had succeeded in his turn to two

highly virtuous rulers named Yao and Shun. Further, Confucius recognized himself as the intellectual successor to a cultural and institutional hero, the Duke of Chou, brother of the founder of the Chou dynasty.

By the year 500 B.C., however, the Chou dynasty was tottering; its descendants had been succeeding one another for more than five centuries. Political and military decadence at the heart of the confederation was reflected in the cultural life generally. All the ruling families of consequence inevitably experienced the desire to succeed to the central royal power. In fact, the history of China from 500 B.C. to 250 B.C. is the story of the diplomatic and military efforts to determine this succession. It was the state of Ch'in in northwestern China which finally won; it not only succeeded to the royal power, it founded the Chinese empire. So momentous was this event in eastern Asia that the name of Ch'in long persisted in India and southeastern Asia whence Western navigators imported it to Europe to become the normal European and American name for that part of the world, China. Meanwhile, the Chinese had been designating their country by the name of their current dynasty or, particularly today, by the term Chung-kuo, Middle Kingdom, which aptly expresses Chinese nationalistic geography.



The teacher Confucius was too ardent an idealist to have a successful political career. Yet he did teach and inspire pupils who were able to found a tradition and reverence which, after crystallization, became an orthodoxy for literate Chinese during two millennia. In the pages of this document the reader can meet the ideals and dicta of the Confucian good life in their oldest and most informal presentation. They have constituted the foundation of family and social morality in the Far East down to the very present.

Let us remember that this book, like most others that have come to us out of antiquity, is informal in presentation. The contents are incomplete and the subjects undeveloped because they were inspired by very specific occasions. It remains, however, that we have here a Great Book, a classic in the true sense of the word, for it speaks, as it has spoken, to all ages and all generations according to their lights, and to all men according to their station.



# Chapter 1

AS ONE LEARNS . . .

[ 1 ]

"How pleasant it is to repeat constantly what we are learning!

"How happy we are when some friend returns from a long trip!

"To remain unconcerned though others do not know of us—that is to be the perfect gentleman!"

[ 2 ]

Yu Jo has said, "The filial and fraternal who are fond of offending their superiors are indeed few. Those who bring confusion to our midst always begin by being fond of offending their superiors.

"The perfect gentleman applies himself to the fundamentals, for once the fundamentals are there The Right Way comes into existence. It is filial piety and fraternal piety that are fundamental to manhood at its best."

## [ 3 ]

“Clever talk and domineering manner have little to do with manhood at its best.”

## [ 4 ]

Tseng Ts'an once said, “Daily I examine myself on three points: Have I failed to be loyal in my work for others? Have I been false with my friends? Have I failed to repeat what I was taught?”

## [ 5 ]

“If you would bring a medium-sized state into The Right Way be truthful as you respectfully attend to your duties; while being frugal, love others; work the people only at the proper seasons.”

## [ 6 ]

“Let youth practice filial piety; let it practice fraternal piety; let it earnestly give itself to being truthful. As it feels an affection for all let it be particularly fond of manhood at its best. Any surplus energy may be used for book-learning.”

## [ 7 ]

Pu Shang once said, “If a man adopts the proper

manner in dealing with those of the highest caliber; if he can use up every ounce of energy in serving his parents; if he can go so far as to sacrifice himself in the service of his prince; if he keeps his word in his relations with friends; although he is said to be uneducated, I would certainly claim that he is."

## [ 8 ]

"If the perfect gentleman is not grave he will not properly impress others; any students he may have will not remain firm in his doctrine.

"Put loyalty and truthfulness first.

"Have none as friend who is not like yourself.

"If you have faults, do not object to changing."

## [ 9 ]

Tseng Ts'an once said, "If there is careful attention to burial rites; if the offerings are made to the dead; the people, I promise you, will revert fully to high moral conduct."

## [ 10 ]

Ch'en K'ang once asked Tuan-mu Tz'u, "When our Master arrives in a place he always learns about its administration. Does he ask for this information or is it given to him?"

"Our Master gets it through his gentleness, his excellence, his modesty, his restraint, his complaisance. How differently from others does our Master seek his information!"

## [ 11 ]

"While his father lives, observe a man's purposes; when the father dies, observe his actions. If for the three years a man does not change from the ways of his father, he may be called filial."

## [ 12 ]

Yu Jo once said, "In carrying out the rites it is fittingness that is prized. This is what is so fine in the ways of our early kings; in all affairs, whether great or small, they followed this principle. But there is one thing which may not be allowed. To practice the principle of fittingness without subjecting it to the restraints of the rites is not allowed."

## [ 13 ]

Yu Jo has also said, "If the maintenance of truthfulness does not violate justice, any promise made may be kept. If the modesty that is shown does not violate the rites, there will be no shame or dishonor involved. If the reliance that is placed does

not violate the interest of the family, it may be honored."

[ 14 ]

"If the prince does not seek satiety at table or ease at home; if, intent upon his affairs and careful of his words, he turns to those who know *The Right Way* and rectifies himself in accordance with it; of him I will indeed say that he is fond of learning."

[ 15 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u once inquired, "What would you say of the man who, though poor, does not flatter; of the man who, though rich, is not proud?"

"They are all right, but they are not to be compared with the one who, though poor, is happy, and the one who, though rich, is fond of the rites."

"Is this what is meant when it says in *The Poems*, 'He looks like something cut out, then filed; like something carved, then polished'?"

"With you I can finally discuss *The Poems*. When I have told you what precedes, you know what follows."

[ 16 ]

"I am not concerned that people do not know of me; I am concerned that I do not know of them."

# Chapter 2

TO GOVERN . . .

[ 1 ]

“To be of high moral conduct when engaged in administration is to be like the North Star. As it remains in its one position, all the other stars surround it.”

[ 2 ]

“*The Poems* may be summed up in one of their phrases: ‘Let our thoughts be free from evil.’”

[ 3 ]

“If the people are kept in The Right Way by administration and are all treated as equals in the matter of punishment, they may succeed in doing no wrong, but they will also feel no sense of shame. On the other hand, if they are kept in The Right Way by high moral conduct and are treated as



equals before the rites, they will reform themselves through a sense of shame.”

## [ 4 ]

“At fifteen I thought only of study; at thirty I began playing my rôle; at forty I was sure of myself; at fifty I was conscious of my position in the universe; at sixty I was no longer argumentative; and now at seventy I can follow my heart’s desire without violating custom.”

## [ 5 ]

Chung-sun Ho-chi asked about filial piety. “It consists in contravening none of the precepts.”

Later, the Master said to Fan Hsü, who was driving, “When asked about filial piety I replied that it consisted in contravening none of the precepts.”

“What did you mean by that?”

“While the parents live, serve them according to the rites. When they die, bury them according to the rites and make the offerings to them according to the rites.”

## [ 6 ]

When Chung-sun Chih asked about filial piety

the reply came, "Let the sole worry of your parents be that you might become ill."

## [ 7 ]

Yen Yen asked about *filial piety*. "Today when people call a man *filial* they mean that he is supporting his parents. But he does as much for his dogs and horses! If he does not show respect for his parents, how is he differentiating between them and the animals?"

## [ 8 ]

To Pu Shang's question on *filial piety* the reply was given, "Manner presents the difficulty. The mere assumption of burdens and the mere allowing of elders to be the first to eat or drink do not constitute *filial piety*."

## [ 9 ]

"I can talk with Yen Hui all day, and in offering me no objections he looks like a dunce. But we find upon examination that his private life exemplifies The Right Way. Yen Hui is no dunce."

## [ 10 ]

"Look at the means which a man employs; con-

sider his motives; observe his pleasures. A man simply cannot conceal himself!"

## [ 11 ]

*"If, while being a student of the past, a man also understands the new things which surround us, he may be used as a teacher."*

## [ 12 ]

"The perfect gentleman is no robot."

## [ 13 ]

T'uan-mu Tz'u asked about the perfect gentleman. "First he sets the good example, then he invites others to follow it."

## [ 14 ]

"The perfect gentleman, being universal in his outlook, is impartial; the mean man, being partial, is not universal in his outlook."

## [ 15 ]

"Learning without thought ends in a blur. Thought without learning will soon totter."

[ 16 ]

*"It is indeed harmful to come under the sway of utterly new and strange doctrines."*

[ 17 ]

"Shall I tell you what knowledge is? It is to know both what one knows and what one does not know."

[ 18 ]

Chuan-sun Shih studied with a view to good pay. "After learning as much as possible and setting aside all that is doubtful, speak circumspectly about the rest, then you will be free from error. After seeing as much as possible and setting aside all that is not sound, carefully put the rest into operation, then you will be free from regrets. Let your language be free from error and your actions free from regrets: therein lies good pay."

[ 19 ]

Duke Ai inquired, "What shall I do that the people may be submissive?"

"If you employ upright officials in place of the crooked ones, the people will become submissive. If

you employ crooked officials in place of the upright, your people will not be submissive."

[ 20 ]

Chi-sun Fei inquired how to get the people to work hard and at the same time remain respectful and loyal. "If one is sedate in their presence, they will be respectful. If one is filial and kind, they will be loyal. If one employs the competent as officials and instructs the less able, the people will work hard."

[ 21 ]

Somebody once remarked to Confucius, "Why aren't you working in the government?"

"It is written in *The Writings of Old*, 'Filial piety! Just let there be filial piety! Then there will be kindness towards brothers, and this in turn will spread to the administration.' This too is to be working in the government. Why must one actually hold office in order to work in the government?"

[ 22 ]

"A man who is not truthful is utterly useless. How can we move a large vehicle which lacks its crossbar, or even a small vehicle without its crossbar?"

## [ 23 ]

Chuan-sun Shih inquired whether it was possible to know about things ten generations from now. "When Yin succeeded to the Hsia rites it was possible to know what changes would be made. When the Chou succeeded to the Yin, it was possible to know what changes would be made. If there are any successors to the Chou, even one hundred generations hence, it is possible to know their characteristics, for the world moves according to a plan known to the experts."

## [ 24 ]

"It is flattery to make offerings to the dead who do not belong to your own family. It is cowardice to fail to do what is right."

# Chapter 3

## EIGHT ROWS . . .

### [ 1 ]

Confucius said of the Chis who used eight rows of eight singers and dancers each at the celebrations in honor of their family—only the king should use so many—that if they could permit themselves this, they were capable of anything.

### [ 2 ]

The three big families of Lu were using a royal hymn to accompany the clearing away of the ritual utensils. "The words of this hymn go like this, 'Only princes have acted as assistants to our service, The Son of Heaven has been majestic.' How can these words be used in the home of the three big families?"

### [ 3 ]

"If one is not man at his best, what is the use of

knowing the rites? What is the use of knowing about music?"

[ 4 ]

Lin Fang asked what was fundamental in the rites. "A very important question! If in carrying out a provision of the rites you tend to be luxurious, it would be better to cut down a bit. If in conducting your funerals you tend to take things for granted, it would be better to show your grief more."

[ 5 ]

"China without a recognized leader is preferable to foreigners with all their leaders."

[ 6 ]

When the Chis, who lacked the proper authority, offered sacrifice to Mt. T'ai, the Master said to their chief minister, Jan Ch'iu, "Couldn't you prevent them from violating the code?"

"No."

"Would anybody claim that Mt. T'ai is less intelligent than Lin Fang in regard to the rites?"

[ 7 ]

"There is nothing which the perfect gentleman





“The perfect gentleman, after greeting and yielding to the others, mounts to the range.” [Chapter 3, verse 7]

will contest with others. Since it is obligatory, however, he will engage in the archery tournaments. After greeting and yielding to the others, he mounts to the range. After he has finished he comes back and plays his proper rôle in the drinking (the loser must drink; for the winner there is no compulsion). In such a contest he is still a perfect gentleman."

## [ 8 ]

Pu Shang asked the meaning of the following lines from *The Poems*: "Her artful smile is lovely, Her fair eyes flash black and white, To the plain and natural there is added decoration."

"Ornament is added to the plain natural background."

"The learning of the code of rites should then be added only to a high moral character?"

"Pu Shang knows how to make my meaning clear. I can talk to him now about *The Poems*."

## [ 9 ]

"As an expert in such matters, I can talk about the rites of the Hsia and Yin dynasties, but their descendants in Ch'i and Sung cannot prove what I say. This is because both written and oral traditions are too fragmentary. If they were not so fragmen-

tary I should be able to prove my words, for I am a descendant of the Yin kings."

[ 10 ]

"At the grand sacrificial service held once every five years, once the libations have been poured I no longer desire to look on, for the whole affair becomes too elaborate and confusing."

[ 11 ]

Somebody asked for an explanation of this same grand sacrificial service. "I cannot give one. Any person who would know how to explain it would have the world right here." And he pointed to the palm of his hand.

[ 12 ]

There is a dictum: Make your offerings to the ancestors as though they were actually present in person; make your offerings to the divinities as though they were actually present in person. "If I do not participate in the service, for me there has been no service."

[ 13 ]

Wang-sun Chia asked, "What would you say of

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*the adage: Better to be on good terms with the spirit of the hearth, which cooks our food, than with the tutelary spirits, whom we never see?"*

"I disagree. Whoever offends against Heaven has no court of appeal."

[ 14 ]

"Thanks to the two predecessors, outstanding is the culture of Chou! I follow it rather than its predecessors."

[ 15 ]

Whenever the Master was present at the state sacrifices to the prince's ancestors, he would inquire carefully into all that went on. This caused somebody to say, "How can it be claimed that Confucius knows the rites? Every time he is present here he asks about everything!" When this was reported to the Master he remarked, "Such procedure is required by the rites."

[ 16 ]

"In the archery contest no special emphasis is laid upon piercing the target, for the strength of the contestants varies. It is style that is important; such was the way of the ancients."

## [ 17 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u wished to drop the custom of sacrificing a sheep to announce to the ancestors the beginning of each new month. "You are in love with the sheep; I, with the ceremony."

## [ 18 ]

"If a prince were served with all due ceremony today, people would think he was being flattered."

## [ 19 ]

Duke Ting inquired how a prince employs his subjects and how his subjects serve their prince. "The prince is ceremonious; subjects, loyal."

## [ 20 ]

"The poem Kuan-chü expresses joy but it is not low; it expresses grief but not mutilation."

## [ 21 ]

When Duke Ai asked Tsai Yü about the altar to be erected in honor of Earth, he replied, "The Hsias planted pines there; the Yin, cedars; the Chou, chestnut trees. In the last case it is said that it was with a view to inspiring the people with fear and trembling." When this was reported to the

Master he said, "No explanations are offered for a thing that is over; no objections, to a matter that is already in progress; no blame, for errors that have been committed."

## [ 22 ]

"Kuan Chung was a man of slight ability." Somebody asked, "Was it because he was a miser?"

"He had three wives and in his household nobody had double duties. How could it be due to miserliness?"

"Was Kuan Chung then well acquainted with the rites?"

"Princes of states erect screens before the entrances to their palaces, so Kuan Chung erected one too. When two princes of states have a friendly meeting they use a special serving table on which they turn their cups upside down after the drinking; Kuan Chung also had one. If one could act like Kuan Chung and still be considered to know the rites, then everybody knows them!"

## [ 23 ]

The Master spoke as follows regarding music to the Grand Maestro of Lu: "Music is simple enough. First the instruments are tuned. Then the piece is

played to completion in harmony, the notes all clear, and without interruption."

## [ 24 ]

In Yi a frontier guard seeking an interview said, "Whenever a perfect gentleman comes here I never fail to have a visit with him." The followers conducted him to Confucius, and when he came out he said, "Why are you distressed at the straits you are in? The world has been in ignorance of The Right Way for a long time; but Heaven is going to use your master as a baton with which to strike the bell summoning men to instruction."

## [ 25 ]

The Master said that Shun's music was beautiful in all respects; that it was technically perfect. He further said that the music of the founder of the Chou dynasty was beautiful in all respects, but not technically perfect.

## [ 26 ]

"I cannot stand the sight of an overseer who is not indulgent; of a ceremonious act which is not carried out respectfully; of failure to show grief at a funeral."

# Chapter 4

## TO LIVE AMONG THE EXCELLENT

### [ 1 ]

“To live in a neighborhood of men at their best is the finest thing possible. How can a man be considered wise if, when he has the choice, he does not live in such a place?”

### [ 2 ]

“Those who are not men at their best cannot stand misfortune for a long time; they cannot stand prosperity for a long time. Those who are men at their best are content with manhood at its best; the wise profit from manhood at its best.”

### [ 3 ]

“He who is solely manhood at its best will know which men to like and which ones to hate.”



[ 4 ]

“If you are only halfheartedly bent upon being man at his best, you will hate nobody.”

[ 5 ]

“Wealth and honors are what men desire; but if they come undeserved, don’t keep them. Poverty and low estate are what men dislike; but if they come undeserved, don’t flee them. If the perfect gentleman avoids manhood at its best, how can we call him such? The perfect gentleman does not flee manhood at its best even for the duration of a meal. Even in haste he must abide by it; even in the direst straits he must abide by it.”

[ 6 ]

“I have yet to meet a man fond of living manhood at its best or a man who disliked a lower degree of manhood. The one fond of living manhood at its best would prefer nothing else to it. The one who disliked a lower degree of manhood would be living manhood at its best; he would not let appear in his person anything that was not manhood at its best. Is anybody able for one day to give all his energies to living manhood at its best? I have never seen anybody who lacked such energy. Maybe there

is somebody as weak as all that, but I have never met him."

## [ 7 ]

"Men's excesses depend upon the class to which they belong. By observing his excesses we can tell whether a man is living manhood at its best."

## [ 8 ]

"If you have learned about The Right Way in the morning, you may let yourself die that same evening."

## [ 9 ]

"I cannot discuss things with a gentleman who, while devoted to The Right Way, is at the same time ashamed of poor clothes or bad food."

## [ 10 ]

"The perfect gentleman's attitude toward the world is such that he shows no preferences; he is prejudiced in favor of justice."

## [ 11 ]

"The perfect gentleman cherishes high moral conduct; the mean man, well-being. The perfect gentle-

man cherishes the penal code; the mean man, exemptions therefrom."

[ 12 ]

"He who engages solely in interested action will make himself many enemies."

[ 13 ]

"Who knows how to administer his state with ceremony and deference will experience no difficulties. If he does not know, he may as well dispense with rites."

[ 14 ]

"Do not worry about not holding high position; worry rather about playing your proper rôle. Worry not that no one knows of you; seek to be worth knowing."

[ 15 ]

"Tseng Ts'an, my doctrine is strung upon one sole thing."

"I agree."

When the Master left somebody asked, "What did he mean?"

"The Master's doctrine consists solely of loyalty and reciprocity."

[ 16 ]

“The perfect gentleman is conscious only of justice; the mean man, only of self-interest.”

[ 17 ]

“When you see a man of the highest caliber, give thought to attaining his stature. When you see one who is not, go home and conduct a self-examination.”

[ 18 ]

“As you serve your parents you should remonstrate with them only slightly. If on doing so you find that they are set in having their own way, be even more respectful and do not contrary them. Even though this overwhelms you with toil, do not become angry with them.”

[ 19 ]

“While your parents live, do not sojourn afar; let your sojourning be only in specific places.”

[ 20 ]

“If for the three years one does not change from the ways of the father, one may be called filial.”



“While your parents live, . . . let your sojourning be only  
in specific places.” [Chapter 4, verse 19]

[ 21 ]

"The parents' ages must always be known, both as a source of joy and as a source of dread."

[ 22 ]

"The ancients never exaggerated, for fear of not themselves living up to the lofty sentiments."

[ 23 ]

"When strict with oneself one rarely fails."

[ 24 ]

"The perfect gentleman seeks to be slow of speech but quick of action."

[ 25 ]

"High moral conduct does not remain alone; it is sure to attract neighbors."

[ 26 ]

"In serving a prince importunity brings disgrace; among friends, estrangement."

# Chapter 5

KUNG-YEH CH'ANG . . .

The Master said of Kung-yeh Ch'ang that he would make a good husband; it was not his fault that he had been in prison. So he gave him his daughter in marriage.

[ 2 ]

Of Nan-kung Kua he said that while The Right Way existed in the realm he would be in the government service; if The Right Way disappeared from the realm he would not be one of those to suffer. So he gave him his elder brother's daughter in marriage.

[ 3 ]

Of Mi Pu-ch'i the Master said, "The perfect gentleman is just like this! There must be perfect

gentlemen here in our state of Lu, otherwise how would this man have become as he is?"

[ 4 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u asked, "How would you characterize me?"

"You're a utensil."

"Which kind?"

"A fine cauldron such as was used by the ancients in their ancestral temples."

[ 5 ]

Somebody remarked, "Jan Yung may be man at his best but he lacks eloquence."

"Of what use is eloquence? He who engages in fluency of words to control men often finds himself hated by them. I don't know whether Jan Yung is man at his best, but of what good would eloquence be to him?"

[ 6 ]

The Master wanted Ch'i-tiao K'ai to take office, but he replied, "I have not yet sufficient truthfulness for this." And the Master was pleased.



## [ 7 ]

"The Right Way is not in operation. If I were, therefore, to mount a raft and float out to sea to escape it all, Chung Yu would certainly be the one to accompany me!" And when Chung Yu heard of this he was delighted, but the Master remarked, "Chung Yu is braver than I, but I can't use him."

## [ 8 ]

Chung-sun Chih inquired whether Chung Yu was man at his best. "I don't know."

He asked again. "Chung Yu could be put in charge of the military forces of a medium-sized state, but I do not know whether he is man at his best."

"What about Jan Ch'iu?"

"He could administer a small town or a small military establishment, but I do not know whether he is man at his best."

"What about Kung-hsi Ch'ih?"

"When dressed in formal garb and at court he can be used to carry on conversation with the guests, but I do not know whether he is man at his best."

[ 9 ]

"Who is the better, you, Tuan-mu Tz'u, or Yen Hui?"

"How can I be compared with Yen Hui? On being taught one tenth of a thing he learns all of it, while I learn only one fifth."

"No, you are not as good as he. You and I both are not as good as he!"

[ 10 ]

Tsai Yü stayed in bed even in the daytime. "Rotten wood may not be carved, nor a wall of manure or dirt plastered."

"What have you suffered from your contacts with Tsai Yü?"

"Formerly my attitude toward others was this: Having listened to their words, I felt I knew what their actions would be. Today my attitude is this: After listening to their words, I watch to see what their actions will be. This change is due to my contacts with Tsai Yü."

[ 11 ]

"I have yet to meet a steadfast person."

"There's Shen Ch'ang!"

"Shen Ch'ang is covetous, so how can we call him steadfast?"

[ 12 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u said, "What I do not wish others to do unto me I also wish not to do unto others."

"You're not up to that!"

[ 13 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u said, "We can be taught the external trappings of the Master; we cannot be taught the spirit of his words or his genius."

[ 14 ]

When Chung Yu was taught something but had not yet been able to put it into practice his sole fear was that the experience would be repeated.

[ 15 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u inquired why K'ung Yü was given the epithet of Cultured. "He was diligent and fond of learning, and he did not blush to learn from his inferiors. That is why he was called Cultured."

## [ 16 ]

“Kung-sun Ch’iao possessed four virtues characteristic of the perfect gentleman: humility, respect for superiors, graciousness towards dependents, and a sense of justice towards subordinates.”

## [ 17 ]

“Yen Ying is skilled in human relations; even after long acquaintance he is courteous towards others.”

## [ 18 ]

“Tsang-sun Ch’en, to keep the grand tortoise from Ts’ai, built a shelter where the capitals of the columns were carved with mountains and the beams painted with reeds. Have you ever seen such ignorance?”

## [ 19 ]

Chuan-sun Shih inquired, “Prime Minister Tou Ku was three times appointed to that position but gave no sign of joy, and three times he was removed from office without a sign of sadness. Each time he told the new prime minister about the business of state. How would you characterize him?”

"He was indeed loyal."

"He was indeed man at his best, was he not?"

"I have not yet heard of anything that would warrant the assertion."

"When Ts'ui Chu slew the Prince of Ch'i, Ch'en Hsü-wu avoided him by quitting Ch'i with his ten teams of horses. When he arrived in another realm he remarked, 'The officials here are like Ts'ui Chu,' and then he avoided them. This happened for every state he reached. How would you characterize him?"

"He was indeed a puritan."

"He was indeed man at his best, was he not?"

"I have not yet heard of anything that would warrant the assertion."

[ 20 ]

Chi-sun Hsing-fu acted only after thinking thrice.  
"Twice is quite enough."

[ 21 ]

"Ning Yü displayed his wisdom while the country followed The Right Way, but when it did not, he acted stupid. His wisdom is achievable by others, his stupidity is not."

## [ 22 ]

When in Ch'en the Master said, "Let me return! Let me return home! 'The pupils I left there are proving presumptuous and careless. Most elegantly are they carrying out their ornamentation, but they don't know how to fit it."

## [ 23 ]

"Po-i and Shu-ch'i were never mindful of wrongs done to them, hence they had few enemies."

## [ 24 ]

"Nobody calls Wei-sheng Kao upright! When somebody asked for vinegar he sought it from a neighbor and gave it to him."

## [ 25 ]

"Tso Ch'iu-ming was ashamed of clever talk, domineering manner, and overdeference, and I am ashamed of them too. He was also ashamed to act friendly with a man while inwardly he was angry with him; and so am I."

## [ 26 ]

Once when Yen Hui and Chung Yu were with

him, the Master said, "Why don't you each tell me what you desire most?" Chung Yu said, "I desire carriages, horses, clothes, and furs in such abundance that I could share them with my friends, and if they were damaged I would not be angry." Yen Hui replied, "I should like not to boast of my competencies and not to let my good deeds be known."

Chung Yu then said, "I should like to learn what the Master desires most."

"I should like to bring security to the aged; to be truthful with my friends; to be affectionate toward the young."

[ 27 ]

"This is certainly the end of things! I have yet to meet a man who, on observing his own faults, blamed himself!"

[ 28 ]

"A village of ten homes will certainly contain somebody as loyal and truthful as I, but none to equal my love of learning."

# Chapter 6

JAN YUNG . . .

[ 1, 2 ]

"Jan Yung would make a good king." Jan Yung then asked Confucius's opinion of Kung-sun Chih. "He's all right, but he's simple."

"To preside over the people simply while remaining personally respectful is certainly to be approved. Yet simple action accompanied by personal simplicity would be carrying simplicity too far."

"What Jan Yung says is correct."

[ 3 ]

Duke Ai asked which of the pupils was fondest of learning. "There was Yen Hui. He was fond of learning. He never turned to anger; he never made the same mistake twice. Unfortunately he was short-lived and died. Today there are no Yen Huis. I never hear of anybody who is fond of learning."



## [ 4 ]

While Kung-hsi Ch'ih was on a mission to Ch'i, Jan Ch'iu sought some grain for his mother. The Master said, "Give her a peck." When he asked for more, the Master said, "Give her a bushel." What Jan Ch'iu gave her was a barrellful. The Master then remarked, "Kung-hsi Ch'ih went to Ch'i drawn by sleek horses and clad in fine fur-lined garments, and I have always understood that the perfect gentleman did everything possible to help the poor but nothing to enrich the rich."

## [ 5 ]

When Yüan Hsien was administrator he declined his salary of grain. "Don't act that way! Take it rather and give it to your neighbors!"

## [ 6 ]

To Jan Yung, "Although we may not wish to use in sacrifice the brindled cow's calf which is red and has horns, the divinities of the mountains and rivers would not reject it!"

## [ 7 ]

"Yen Hui for three months at a time would never

think of doing anything contrary to manhood at its best. The rest of my pupils attain to this for only a day or a month."

## [ 8 ]

Chi-sun Fei inquired whether Chung Yu could be employed in the government. "Chung Yu does not hesitate to make decisions, so there is no reason why he should not be employed in the government." Upon further inquiry the Master replied, "Tuan-mu 'Tz'u would be acceptable because he is intelligent; Jan Ch'iu, because he is talented."

## [ 9 ]

The Chis sent a message putting Min Sun in charge of Pi, but he said to the messenger, "You will know how to decline it for me. If you return here to offer me the position, you will certainly find me on the bank of the Wen on my way out of this state."

## [ 10 ]

When Jan Keng was ill the Master went to visit him, but he could only grasp his hand through a window. "We are losing him. It's indeed fate, isn't

it, that such a man should be so sick? That such a man should be so sick!"

## [ 11 ]

"Yen Hui was a man of the highest caliber! With a single basket of food and a ladle of liquid he dwelt in an alley. Another would not have stood the sad state Yen Hui was in; but he was always happy. I insist that he was a man of the highest caliber!"

## [ 12 ]

Jan Ch'iu remarked, "It isn't that I don't like the Master's doctrine; it's just that I haven't enough strength to follow it."

"One who hasn't enough strength becomes exhausted in the middle of the course, but yours is a case of self-hypnosis."

## [ 13 ]

"Be a perfect gentleman of a scholar, Pu Shang! Don't be a mean man of a scholar!"

## [ 14 ]

When Yen Yen was in charge of Wu the Master

inquired, "Have you found anybody there that you can trust?"

"There's a man by the name of T'an-t'ai Mich-ming. He doesn't slink about, and he has been to see me only on matters involving the public weal."

[ 15 ]

"Meng Ts'e is not a boaster. In the flight from the enemy he brought up the rear. But as his men were about to enter the gateway of their city he put the whip to his horses and said, 'It isn't that I was brave enough to be last; my horses were slow.'"

[ 16 ]

"Even though one possessed the beauty of Ch'ao of the state of Sung, without eloquence like that of the prayer-leader T'o it is hard to avoid disaster in our present generation."

[ 17 ]

"Why does no one follow this doctrine of mine just as naturally as they leave a place by the door?"

[ 18 ]

"If the substance overbalances the refinement,

crudeness results. If the refinement overbalances the substance, there is tawdriness. When the refinement and the substance are equally balanced, one has the perfect gentleman."

## [ 19 ]

"Man's life span depends upon his uprightness. He who goes on living without it escapes disaster only by good fortune."

## [ 20 ]

"Being fond of The Right Way is better than just knowing it; and taking one's delight in it is better than just being fond of it."

## 21

"With the portion of mankind that is above the median one may speak of the higher things; with those below it, one may not."

## [ 22 ]

When Fan Hsü asked for a definition of wisdom the Master replied, "If a man gets the people to apply themselves to justice; if he respects the spirits

of the departed and the divinities but is not too familiar with them; we can say that he is wise."

When he asked about manhood at its best the reply came, "He who concentrates upon the task and forgets about the reward may be called man at his best."

## [ 23 ]

"The wise take delight in waters; manhood at its best delights in mountains. The wise are active; manhood at its best is quiet. The wise find delight; manhood at its best enjoys a full span of life."

## [ 24 ]

"By a single change in ruler Ch'i could attain to the excellence of our state of Lu. By a similar change Lu could be living under The Right Way."

## [ 25 ]

"If an urn lacks the characteristics of an urn, how can we call it an urn?"

## [ 26 ]

Tsai Yü asked, "If one who was man at his best

were told that somebody had fallen into a well, would he go in after him?"

"Why should he do that? The perfect gentleman may approach the well, but he may not get down into it. He can be deceived; but he cannot be entrapped."

[ 27 ]

"Isn't it true that the perfect gentleman studies widely with a view to refinement, but, keeping it all within bounds, adheres to the code of rites and thus commits no transgression?"

[ 28 ]

When the Master had an interview with the infamous Lady Nan-tzu, Chung Yu was displeased. But the Master took an oath as follows: "If I committed any wrong, may Heaven knock me flat! May it knock me flat!"

[ 29 ]

"High moral conduct along the golden mean is indeed the supreme form of such conduct. For a long time, however, few among the people have been capable of it."

[ 30 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u inquired. "What would you say if somebody were to spread gifts widely among the people so as to help the whole mass of them? Could such an individual be called man at his best?"

"How could such a thing be achieved by mere manhood at its best? What would be needed is a sage! And even the sages Yao and Shun complained on this score! I would describe manhood at its best like this: What it would desire as its own rôle, it assigns to others. What it would itself attain, it causes others to attain. Ability to draw analogies from oneself may be called the secret of manhood at its best."



# Chapter 7

TRANSMIT . . .

[ 1 ]

“I transmit but I do not create; I am sincerely fond of the ancient. I would compare myself to our Old P’eng who was fond of talking about the good old days.”

[ 2 ]

“To take note of things in silence, to be unsatiated though having studied, never to weary of teaching others; nobody surpasses me in these three things.”

[ 3 ]

“Not to improve my high moral conduct, not to expound what I have studied, to be taught what is proper but be unable to change, to be unable to rectify my incompetencies; these are my worries.”

[ 4 ]

When the Master was unoccupied, he was relaxed; he looked pleasant.

[ 5 ]

"Greatly have I declined! For a long time now I haven't seen the Duke of Chou again in my dreams."

[ 6 ]

"Let your will be directed to The Right Way. Put your dependence in high moral conduct. Let your reliance be upon manhood at its best. Pass your time in the gentlemanly pursuits."

[ 7 ]

"I always give my instruction, even if only a pittance is offered me."

[ 8 ]

"I do not instruct the uninterested; I do not help those who fail to try. If I mention one corner of a subject and the pupil does not deduce therefrom the other three, I drop him."

[ 9 ]

When eating beside a man in mourning the Master never ate to satiety.

[ 10 ]

On the day that he had wailed at a funeral the Master did not sing.

11

"Isn't it only you and I, Yen Hui, who are capable of this: When given employment, to work; when discarded, to live quietly?"

Chung Yu then inquired, "If you were in charge of the army whom of us would you take with you?"

"I would not take along one who, like a raving tiger or a raging torrent, would recklessly throw away his life. What is required is somebody keenly conscious of responsibility; somebody fond of accomplishment through orderly planning."

[ 12 ]

"If one could achieve excellence through riches, I would do it that way even though it meant being a carriage driver. If it cannot be achieved that way,

I will continue to follow the way of the ancients, of which I am fond."

## [ 13 ]

The Master was cautious in regard to three things: fastings and purifications, battles, and illness.

## [ 14 ]

When the Master heard in Ch'i a melody ascribed to the great sage Shun, he went three months without meat. "I never thought that a melody as fine as all this had ever been composed!"

## [ 15 ]

Jan Ch'iu inquired, "Does the Master side with the Prince of Wei whose father is disputing with him the succession?" Tuan-mu Tz'u said, "That's right! I'll ask him." And going in he said, "How would you classify Po-i and Shu-ch'i, two brothers who, swayed by the obligations of filial and fraternal piety, yielded a throne to a third brother."

"They were ancient sages."

"Did they regret their action?"

"Having sought manhood at its best, they attained it. Why should they have had any regrets?"

Tuan-mu Tz'u then went and reported to Jan Ch'iu, "The Master does not side with the prince."

## [ 16 ]

"To eat only vegetables without meat, to drink only water, to have only one's bent arm as a pillow; there can also be joy in such a life! To become rich and honored through injustices; for me this can be compared to a floating cloud."

## [ 17 ]

"Give me a few more years and at fifty I will study the book of divination called *Changes*. Thereby I may become free of big faults."

## [ 18 ]

The Master used the pronunciation of the capital when reciting *The Poems* and *The Writings of Old*, and also when practicing the rites.

## [ 19 ]

Shen Chu-liang asked Chung Yu about Confucius, but he could not reply. Later the Master said to him, "Why didn't you say this, 'He is a man who is so emotional about his work that he forgets to eat. He

is so happy in it that he forgets his worries. He doesn't know that old age is upon him.' ”

[ 20 ]

“I wasn't born knowing what I teach you. Being fond of the past, I attained it through my diligence.”

[ 21 ]

The Master did not speak of anomalies, feats of strength, rebellions, or divinities.

[ 22 ]

“When three of us are walking together I am sure to have a teacher. Having noted his competencies, I follow them up; his incompetencies I avoid.”

[ 23 ]

“Heaven made me the highly moral man that I am. How can Hsiang 'I'ui harm me?”

[ 24 ]

“You all think that I am hiding something from you! I have no secrets! I do nothing that I do not share with you. That's the sort of person I am.”

[ 25 ]

The Master taught four things: literature, conduct, loyalty, and truthfulness.

[ 26 ]

"It was not mine to meet a sage; but maybe I shall meet with a perfect gentleman. It has not been mine to meet a competent man; but maybe I shall meet one possessed of constancy. But when a man pretends to possess something which he lacks; when, being empty, he claims omniscience; when, being petty, he claims to be big; such a man does not possess constancy."

[ 27 ]

The Master fished with a hook but not with a net. He did not shoot his arrow at a perching bird.

[ 28 ]

"There may be some who create things without knowledge, but I am not of that type. After being taught much I selected the best and followed it; I observed much and remembered it. This is second-rate knowledge." (Turn to 16.9.)

[ 29 ]

It was hard to converse with the people of Hu, so when a lad came from there and sought an interview with Confucius, the pupils were in a quandary. "I shall not approve his departure just because I approve his arrival. Why all the worry? When a man, having cleansed himself, arrives, I receive him; but I don't guarantee his future."

[ 30 ]

"Manhood at its best is no remote ideal! We have only to wish for it and straightway it arrives."

[ 31 ]

An official from the state of Ch'en inquired whether Duke Chao was well acquainted with the rites, and Confucius replied that he was. Confucius having withdrawn, the official received Wu-ma Shih and said, "I have been taught that the perfect gentleman is impartial; but is the perfect gentleman partial after all? The Prince of Lu, Duke Chao, took as wife a woman of Wu, and since she had the same clan name as himself he called her Wu Meng-tzu in order to conceal the fact. Now if, as prince, he is considered to know the rites when he commits such violations of them, then everybody knows them!"



When Wu-ma Shih reported this, the Master replied, "Whenever I make a mistake people are sure to know it!"

## [ 32 ]

Whenever the Master in singing with another found him skilled he would harmonize with him as he had him repeat the song.

## [ 33 ]

"I give the best that is in me, just as others do, but as for personally acting the perfect gentleman in service to the state, that I have not yet achieved."

## [ 34 ]

"I make no claims to be a sage or to manhood at its best; but it can be said of me that I act unstintingly with them in view, and that I never weary of teaching others." Upon this Kung-hsi Ch'ih spoke up, "You're right; but your pupils do not know how to imitate you."

## [ 35 ]

When the Master fell ill Chung Yu asked him to pray, and he answered, "Are there any that can be said?"

"Yes. The eulogies read, 'In prayer we turn to the divinities above and here below.'"

"My prayer has been in progress for a long time indeed."

[ 36 ]

"Extravagance leads to disobedience; parsimony leads to miserliness. Of the two I prefer miserliness."

[ 37 ]

"The perfect gentleman is completely at ease; the mean man is always on edge."

[ 38 ]

The Master was gentle in his severity. Although he inspired awe he was not brusque; although modest he was completely at ease.

# Chapter 8

COUNT T'AI . . .

[ 1 ]

“Count T'ai can certainly be called a man of high moral conduct in its supreme form. Although he three times declined the throne, he did it so secretly that the people never got around to praising him for it.”

[ 2 ]

“Not to follow the rites in being modest is annoyance. Not to follow them in exercising care is timidity. Not to follow them in acts of bravery is confusion. Not to follow them in our uprightness is brusqueness.

“If the prince is faithful to his family, the people will abound in evidences of manhood at its best. If he does not neglect his old friends, the people will not treat him lightly.”

## [ 3 ]

When Tseng Ts'an was ill he summoned his pupils and said, "Uncover my feet! Uncover my hands! to show that I have been filial enough to preserve them intact, for *The Poems* say, 'Be fearful as though looking over a deep abyss or as though treading on thin ice.' From now on, however, I shall know how to escape disaster, shall I not, pupils?"

## [ 4 ]

When Tseng Ts'an was on his deathbed Chung-sun Chieh visited him and Tseng Ts'an said, "When a bird is about to die its cry is mournful, but when a man is about to die his words will be practical. Now there are three things of value which the perfect gentleman draws from The Right Way: In his manner he avoids violence and disrespect; in his facial expression he seeks truthfulness; in the tenor of his speech he avoids vileness and vulgarity. The utensils used in the sacrifices he entrusts to specialists."

## [ 5 ]

Tseng Ts'an said, "I once had a friend, Yen Hui, who was like this: although capable he would in-

quire of the less competent; although he knew much he would inquire of those who knew less; his possession looked like non-possession; his fullness resembled emptiness; mistreatment he did not return."

## [ 6 ]

Tseng Ts'an said, "He can be entrusted with the education of a young child; he can be entrusted with the rule of a state; in a moment of crisis he remains unshaken. Is such a man a perfect gentleman? He is."

## [ 7 ]

Tseng Ts'an said, "The gentleman simply must be brave and courageous, for his burden is heavy and his road long. Manhood at its best is his personal burden, and how heavy it is! After death it is over, but how far off that is!"

## [ 8 ]

"Stir emotions with *The Poems*; assign proper rôles with the rites; provide unity with music."

## [ 9 ]

"The people can be made to use a thing, but it cannot be made to understand it."

[ 10 ]

"He who is fond of bravery but complains of poverty is going to create disorder.

"If the human being who is not man at his best suffers too much, disorder will ensue."

[ 11 ]

"Though a man possess all the good qualities of the Duke of Chou, if he is proud and miserly the rest of him does not merit consideration."

[ 12 ]

"It is hard to find a man who will study for three years without thinking of a post in government."

[ 13 ]

"In all sincerity and truthfulness be fond of learning. Even if you die in its defense, become skilled in The Right Way. Do not enter a state which is tottering with immorality. Do not remain in a state which is in rebellion. If the world is following The Right Way, let yourself be seen therein; if not, live in hiding. If a state is following The Right Way, it is a disgrace to be in poverty and a low estate therein; if not, it is a disgrace to be rich and honored therein."

[ 14 ]

"Let the other man do his job without your interference."

[ 15 ]

"When the maestro Chih took up his office, how the final strains of the poem Kuan-chü in all their glory filled our ears!"

[ 16 ]

"A man who is not upright and at the same time is presumptuous; one who is not diligent and at the same time is ignorant; one who is untruthful and at the same time is incompetent; such men I do not count among acquaintances."

[ 17 ]

"Study as though you would never get it; as though in fear of losing it."

[ 18 ]

"How exalted was Shun's and Yü's ruling of the world! They did so with detachment."

[ 19 ]

"Great was Yao as a prince! How exalted! It was

the greatness of Heaven that Yao took as model. How vast! The people lacked terms to describe him. How exalted were his accomplishments! How brilliant his elegance!"

## [ 20 ]

Under Shun, by five officials the world was kept in order. King Wu is quoted as saying, "I have ten officials to keep order." In this regard Confucius once said, "How true it is that talent is hard to come by! It was most abundant in the time of Yao and Shun. Under King Wu one was a woman, so there were only nine men. While in possession of two-thirds of the world to continue in submission to a depraved Yin was the high moral conduct of the founder of the Chou dynasty. It may be called the supreme form of high moral conduct."

## [ 21 ]

"I find no fault in Yü. While meager in his own consumption of food and drink, he was filial to the spirits and divinities. While poor in his own dress, the vestments for the services were beautiful. While living in a humble abode, he devoted all his energies to the digging of irrigation canals. I find no fault in Yü."



# Chapter 9

RARELY DID THE MASTER . . .

[ 1 ]

The Master rarely spoke of profit; his attachment was for fate; it was for manhood at its best.

[ 2 ]

A man of Ta-hsiang said, "Great indeed is Confucius! His learning is wide but there is nothing for which he is particularly renowned." When this was reported, the Master replied to his pupils, "What is my strong point? Is it driving or is it shooting? It is driving, the humblest of the six arts."

[ 3 ]

"A hemp hat was required by the rites of old, but today everybody uses silk. I follow the majority. The rites require that one bow at the foot of the steps, but today everybody bows at the top, and this is

presumption. Though it is contrary to the majority, I continue to bow at the foot."

## [ 4 ]

The Master recognized four prohibitions: Do not be swayed by personal opinion; recognize no inescapable necessity; do not be stubborn; do not be egotistic.

## [ 5 ]

When imperiled at K'uang the Master spoke as follows: "When King Wen died, did his high culture (wen) disappear too? If Heaven had been going to let this high culture go to nought, it would not have permitted a later mortal to become attached to it. Since Heaven has not let it go to nought, what can the people of K'uang do to me?"

## [ 6 ]

The Prime Minister of Wu asked Tuan-mu Tz'u, "If your master is a sage, why does he know so many trades?"

"There is no question but that Heaven gave him free rein to become a sage; but he does know many trades."

When it was reported, the Master said, "The

prime minister really knows me! As a youth I was poor, hence I learned to do many things. But does the perfect gentleman have many trades? No!"

[ 7 ]

Ch'in Lao remarked, "The Master used to say, 'Since I have not been employed as an official, I know how to do things.'"

[ 8 ]

"Am I a wise man? No! But if a lowly person asks me a question in complete ignorance, I tell him all I know about it from beginning to end."

[ 9 ]

"The phenix does not arrive; the river does not produce a design. It must be concluded that this age is to have no sage-king. I am through, am I not?"

[ 10 ]

When the Master saw a man dressed in mourning, or an official, or a blind man, if he was receiving them, even though they might be younger, he would always rise. When passing them, he would do so quickly.

## [ 11 ]

Yen Hui once heaved a long sigh and said, "When I look up at the Master's doctrine, I find it very high. When I bore into it, it is very hard. When I catch sight of it before me, it suddenly proves to be to my rear. But the Master is skilled in leading others forward step by step. To broaden me he uses books. To put restraints upon me he uses the rites. When I wish to give up, I find myself unable. When I have given his doctrine all that is in me, there is still something standing unconquered, and even though I wish to pursue it, I can't."

## [ 12 ]

When the Master was seriously ill, Chung Yu had his pupils act as though they were his attendants. When the illness eased the Master said, "It's a long time now that Chung Yu has been deceiving me. In acting as though there were attendants when there are none, whom do I deceive, Heaven? As compared to dying in the hands of attendants, I would prefer to die in the hands of you, my pupils. Even though I would not thus have an elaborate funeral, I certainly would not be dying along the road."

[ 13 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u inquired, "If there were a gem here, would you keep it in a box or would you sell it for the highest price?"

"I would sell it certainly, but I would wait for the purchaser."

[ 14 ]

When the Master wanted to go live among the tribes somebody remarked, "What about their crudeness?"

"If a perfect gentleman were living among them, how could they be crude? His very presence would alter all that."

[ 15 ]

"Since I have returned from Wci, in Lu the music has been corrected, and *The Poems* returned to their proper status."

[ 16 ]

"In public serve one's superiors and in private serve one's father and elder brothers. Be zealous in carrying out funeral arrangements. Do not come under the influence of alcohol. None of these are a problem to me."

[ 17 ]

Standing on the bank of a stream, the Master said, "Those who quit their native states are like this, are they not? It stops neither day nor night."

[ 18 ]

"I have yet to meet a man as fond of high moral conduct as he is of outward appearances."

[ 19 ]

"My teaching may be compared to the building of a mountain. If a man stops before the last load is placed, I stop. It may be compared to leveling up a place. Even though a man has dumped only one load, there is progress. I go to him."

[ 20 ]

"The one who can speak of my doctrine without becoming weary is Yen Hui."

[ 21 ]

"What a pity that Yen Hui is gone! I saw him make progress, but I never found out what his limit was."

[ 22 ]

“Isn’t it true that some shoots do not indeed survive, while others survive but produce no grain at all?”

[ 23 ]

“Juniors are to be respected. How do we know that in future they will not be our equals? If, however, at forty or fifty they have no reputation, they need no longer be respected.”

[ 24 ]

“Standard-setting directives must be followed, but the important thing is self-reformation. The words of appointment to a post are pleasing, but the important thing is self-reflection. There is nothing I can do about cases of satisfaction without self-reflection; or compliance without self-reformation.”

[ 25 ]

“Put loyalty and truthfulness first. Have no friends inferior to yourself. If you have faults do not fear to reform.”

[ 26 ]

“A commander may be snatched away from his

army, but will cannot be taken from the humblest man.

[ 27 ]

"The one who, though clad in poor clothes, can stand unabashed among those clad in furs is indeed Chung Yu. As it says in *The Poems*, 'He does no harm, he seeks nothing. What need has he of evil?'"

When Chung Yu kept reciting this the Master remarked, "Must you harp upon such characteristics?"

[ 28 ]

"When the weather turns cold, we realize that the pines and firs are the last to shed."

[ 29 ]

"Wisdom has no doubts. Manhood at its best has no concerns. Courage is without fear."

[ 30 ]

"It may be possible to study jointly with a man without yet being able to approach along with him The Right Way. It may be possible to approach The Right Way with him without yet being able



to become established therein with him. It may be possible to become established therein with him without yet being able to exercise judgment along with him.

“*The Poems* read, ‘As the flowers of the cherry tree flutter and turn could I help but think of you? Yet your home is far from here.’ This means that before we give it thought, a thing can seem to be near when it is not.”

# Chapter 10

AT HOME . . .

[ 1 ]

At home Confucius was pleasant and agreeable, but more like a person who could not express himself. At the ancestral temple or the prince's court he spoke up clearly and with facility, but always respectfully.

At court, when speaking with a grand gentleman of the lower order he was frank and firm; with those of the higher order he was affable and discursive. When the prince was present he was respectful to the point of being ill at ease; he was ceremonious to the highest degree.

[ 2 ]

When the prince placed him in charge of receiving visitors from out of state, his countenance changed and his step became uncertain. When he

bowed to the visitors, his clasped hands were turned to the left and then to the right, in order to greet them in proper sequence; meanwhile, his skirt remained well adjusted both front and back. As he hurried to report the arrival to the prince, his arms extended to either side in such a way as to resemble a bird's wings. When the visitors withdrew he would always report to the prince, "Your guests are no longer looking this way."

## [ 3 ]

On entering the duke's gateway he would bow as though there were not room to remain upright. He would not stand in the doorway; he would not step on the threshold as he entered. As he passed by the prince's empty place, his countenance would change and his step become uncertain; his speech became like a dumb man's. As he mounted with lifted skirt to the audience hall he seemed to be making a bow; he held his breath as though unable to breathe. On leaving, as soon as he had descended one step, he looked pleased. From the bottom of the steps he moved quickly forward, his arms extended in such a way as to make one think of a bird's wings. On returning to his own place at the reception he became respectful to the point of being ill at ease.

## [ 4 ]

When on an official mission to another state, he grasped the jade tablet which served as the badge of his appointment as though he were bowing and as though it were too heavy for him to lift. He raised it as though he were making the grasped-handed salutation; he lowered it as though he were making a presentation. All of a sudden he would seem to tremble; his feet scarcely moved, as though he were following closely behind someone. He presented his prince's gifts calmly. He presented his own gifts pleasantly.

## [ 5 ]

The perfect gentleman does not have the edge of the collar of his garments colored either plum or deep red. The garments which he wears about the house are neither red nor violet. In the summer he wears about the house a single gown of either fine or coarse hemp; when leaving the house he adds an additional gown. In the winter his outer black gown is worn over a gown lined with lamb's wool; the outer undyed gown is worn over one lined with deer's fur; the outer yellow gown is worn over one lined with fox fur. At home he wears a lined gown which is longer than the one he would wear on

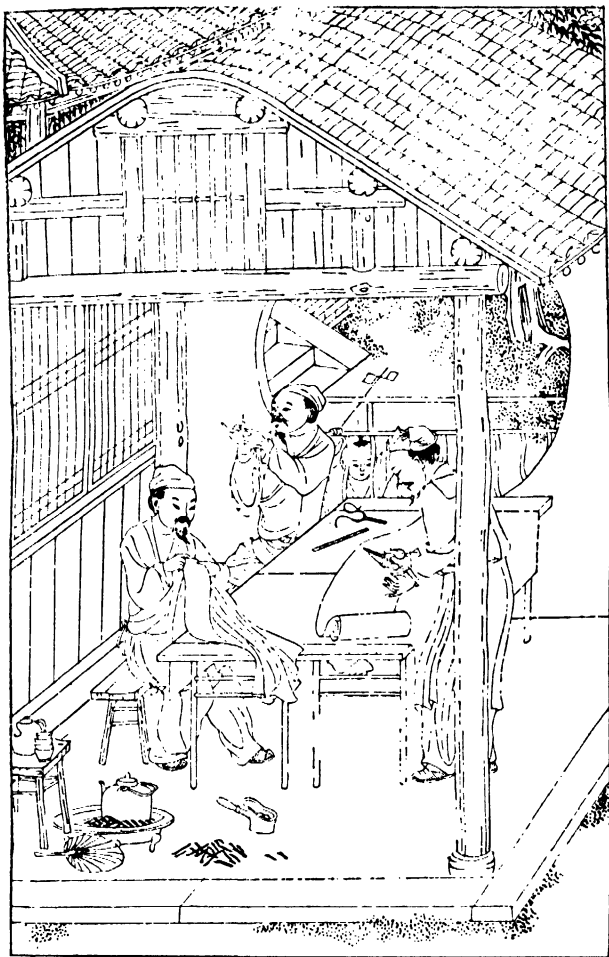


“He raised the jade tablet.” [Chapter 10, verse 4]

ceremonial occasions; in addition the right sleeve is kept short at home for convenience in using the arm. He always wears a nightshirt, and it is half again as long as his body. For home wear his gowns are lined with thick fox or badger fur. Except for funerals, he always wears all his insignia hanging from his sash. Except for the skirt worn at sacrifices, his clothes always are cut and fitted. On visits of condolence he wears neither the wool-lined gown nor the dark hat. On the first day of the month he always attends upon his prince dressed in formal attire. When fasting he always wears freshly laundered clothes; they are made of hemp.

## [ 6 ]

At his fasts his food is different from ordinary; he also abides then in a different place from ordinary. For his gruel he does not object to finely ground grain; he does not object to finely chopped meats. Grain, fish, or meat which are spoiled he does not eat. He does not eat a thing whose color or odor is not right. He does not eat what is over or underripe. He eats nothing out of season. He does not eat what has not been properly cut. He does not eat without the proper sauce. Although the meat may be abundant he does not eat more of it than he does of the



"His clothes are cut and fitted." [Chapter 10, verse 5]

vegetables. He does not restrict the amount of his wine, but he does not let it go to his head. He does not partake of wine and dried meats which have been purchased at a store. He does not refuse food seasoned with ginger, but he does not eat too much of it. When, having assisted his prince in a sacrifice, he receives a present of meat, he does not keep it overnight. After three days he does not eat at all the meat of a sacrifice which has been made in his own home. He does not talk with something in his mouth. He does not talk when going to sleep. Even though it is quite ordinary food and a soup of herbs, when offering some to the departed he always does so respectfully.

## [ 7 ]

If the mat is not straight he does not sit on it.

When his fellow villagers hold a feast, he leaves immediately after the elder folk have gone.

## [ 8 ]

When his fellow villagers are engaged in driving off the demon of pestilence, he dresses in formal attire and stands to the east at the foot of the steps leading up to the ancestral temple.



## [ 9 ]

When he sends a messenger to inquire after someone in another state he bows deeply twice and then sends him off.

## [ 10 ]

When Chi-sun Fei sent him some medicine he received it with a deep bow but said, "Since I do not recognize it, I will not put it to my mouth."

## [ 11 ]

When his stable was burned the Master returned home from the palace and inquired, "Did anybody get hurt?" He did not ask about the horses.

## [ 12 ]

When his prince presented him with food he always straightened his mat before sitting down to eat. If the present was raw meat he always had it cooked before offering it to his ancestors as a prelude to his own meal. When the present was a living animal he always kept it.

Whenever he had a meal with his prince, while

the prince was offering food to his ancestors, the Master would be the first to taste of all the dishes as a protection to his prince.

## [ 13 ]

When he was sick abed and his prince visited him he would lie with his head to the east, lay his formal gown over himself with the sash in proper position.

## [ 14 ]

Whenever the prince summoned him to the palace he would start without waiting for his carriage to be hitched up.

## [ 15 ]

Whenever he was present at the state sacrifices to the prince's ancestors he would inquire carefully into all that went on.

## [ 16 ]

When a friend died homeless Confucius would say, "Entrust the funeral to me."

Presents from friends, even to vehicles and horses

—with the exception of meat from the sacrifices—he did not acknowledge with a deep bow.

[ 17 ]

He would not lie down in such a way as to resemble a corpse. When at home he lived informally.

[ 18 ]

On receiving a man in mourning, even though he was a close friend, he would assume an appropriate air. When receiving an official or a blind man, even though he knew him very well, he would assume an appropriate attitude.

If from his carriage he saw a man in mourning he would greet him. He would also greet any one carrying the census record.

Whenever his bowl was filled at a feast he would blush and rise to thank his host.

At a sudden clap of thunder or a gust of wind he would always flush.

[ 19 ]

When getting into his carriage he kept himself erect and grasped firmly the rope. Once in the car-

riage he did not turn to see what was behind him; he did not shout; he did not point.

[ 20, 21 ]

When a bird sees a menacing person, it flies out of reach, and after flitting about for a time comes to perch. On seeing this happen Confucius remarked, "The female bird there on the ridge certainly knows how to adapt itself to the needs of the moment!" When Yen Yen got it between his hands it uttered three cries and flew away.

# Chapter 11

## THE PIONEERS . . .

### [ 1 ]

"The first ones to formulate the rites and music are called crude; those who did it later, perfect gentlemen. When it is a question of drawing upon rites and music, I follow the work of the pioneers."

### [ 2 ]

"None of those who accompanied me to Ch'en and Ts'ai got as far as the princes' gates."

### [ 3 ]

Yen Hui, Min Sun, Jan Keng, and Jan Yung were known for their high moral conduct; Tsai Yü and Tuan-mu Tz'u, for eloquence; Jan Ch'iu and Chung Yu, as administrators; Yen Yen and Pu Shang, for their book-learning.

## [ 4 ]

"Yen Hui was not one to help me develop my theme; he was satisfied with everything I said."

## [ 5 ]

"Min Sun was really filial, for nobody speaks of him differently from his parents and brothers."

## [ 6 ]

Because Nan-kung Kua repeated three times the line of *The Poems* stressing careful speech Confucius gave him his brother's daughter for wife.

## [ 7 ]

When Chi-sun Fci inquired which of the pupils was fondest of learning Confucius replied, "There was Yen Hui. He was fond of learning, but unfortunately, being short-lived, he is already dead. So today there are no more who are fond of learning."

## [ 8 ]

When Yen Hui died his father asked for the Master's carriage that he might exchange it for an

external coffin. The Master replied, "Whether talented or not, I call all the pupils son. When my own son, K'ung Li, died, we used just the one coffin and not an external one. I did not go about on foot in order to provide him with an external coffin. Further, being myself the son of a grand gentleman, it is improper for me to go about on foot."

## [ 9 ]

When Yen Hui died the Master cried, "Alas, Heaven is bringing me to nought."

## [ 10 ]

When Yen Hui died the Master wept for him bitterly, and a follower remarked, "You are weeping too bitterly."

"Not too bitterly. If I didn't weep bitterly for such a man, for whom would I weep bitterly?"

## [ 11 ]

When Yen Hui died the other pupils wished to bury him with all possible pomp, but Confucius disapproved. Nevertheless, they did bury him with pomp, and the Master said, "Yen Hui looked upon me as a father, but I have not been successful in

treating him as I did my own son. This is not my fault. It is your fault, my pupils." (Turn to No. 8, above.)

## [ 12 ]

Chung Yu inquired about the proper treatment of spirits and divinities. "You can't treat spirits and divinities properly before you are able to treat your fellow men properly."

When he inquired about death, the reply came, "You can't know about death before you know about life."

## [ 13 ]

When attending upon the Master, Min Sun looked pleased; Chung Yu, stern; Jan Ch'iu and Tuan-mu 'Iz'u, frank; and the Master was pleased. But of Chung Yu he said, "He will not die a natural death."

## [ 14 ]

When the leaders of Lu were rebuilding their treasury, Min Sun remarked, "Wouldn't it be all right to keep the old one? Why must it be rebuilt?" And the Master said, "This man is not given to





“Chung Yu inquired about the proper treatment of spirits and divinities.” [Chapter 11, verse 12]

talking, but when he does say something it is sure to be to the point."

## [ 15 ]

"Why does Chung Yu have to play the guitar at my gateway?" Thereupon the pupils showed little respect for Chung Yu, but the Master remarked, "What I meant was that Chung Yu has indeed come to the house, but he has not yet entered it."

## [ 16 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u inquired which was of the higher caliber, Chuan-sun Shih or Pu Shang. "The former is excessive; the latter, deficient."

"In that case, Chuan-sun Shih is of higher caliber."

"Excess and deficiency are equally faulty."

## [ 17 ]

The Chis were richer than the Duke of Chou had ever been, yet Jan Ch'iu, by accumulating taxes for them, increased their wealth. Therefore, the Master declared, "He's no pupil of mine! Pupils, you have my permission to attack him with your drums rolling."

## [ 18 ]

The pupil Kao Ch'ai was stupid. Tseug Ts'an was dull. Chuan-sun Shih was flighty. Chung Yu was coarse.

"Yen Hui almost achieved the ideal, but he was usually penniless. Tuan-mu Tz'u was not an obedient pupil, but, having amassed wealth in the thousands, he was normally judicious."

## [ 19 ]

When Chuan-sun Shih inquired about the path pursued by the able man the Master replied, "He does not follow in established precedent. He also does not make himself one of us."

On another occasion the Master replied to this question, "Such a man is given to frank and honest discourse, but is he a perfect gentleman or is he merely a man who looks serious?"

## [ 20 ]

Chung Yu inquired whether he should put into immediate effect something which he had just learned. "How can you do that while your father and an elder brother are still alive?" To Jan Ch'iu's

similar question the reply came, "Yes. Put it into immediate effect."

Kung-hsi Ch'ih then spoke up. "The replies which you have just given confuse me."

"Jan Ch'iu is slow, so I urged him to promptness; Chung Yu has enough energy for two, so I slowed him down."

[ 21 ]

When the Master was imperiled at K'uang Yen Hui got left behind. When they were together again the Master said, "I had given you up for dead."

"Would I dare die while you are alive?"

[ 22 ]

Chi Tzu-jan inquired whether Chung Yu and Jan Ch'iu, who were in his employ, might be considered great ministers. "I thought you were going to inquire about something extraordinary, but you ask only about Chung Yu and Jan Ch'iu. The so-called great minister serves his prince in keeping with The Right Way, and if that is impossible, he quits his post. I would call these two men run-of-the-mill ministers only."

"In that case, will they be obedient?"

"They will not go so far as to slay a father or a prince."

## [ 23 ]

Chung Yu put Kao Ch'ai in charge of Pi. "The people there will not be getting their money's worth."

"There are people and altars there, which will give him practical experience. Why should he take time for studies now? He can do that later."

"This is why I dislike the talker."

## [ 24 ]

Chung Yu, Tseng Tien, Jan Ch'iu, and Kung-hsi Ch'ih were seated in attendance. "Forget that I am a bit older than you, and answer me frankly. When you are unemployed in government you are always saying that you are unknown. Suppose that somebody did employ you, what would you do?"

Chung Yu replied precipitately, "Suppose a medium-sized state were caught between two large ones and invaded by troops so that a famine ensued. If I were in charge, within three years it would have bold soldiers and also a strategy." The Master smiled at him.

"What would you do, Jan Ch'iu?"

"If I could have charge of a tiny territory for three years, I could bring its people sufficiency. For rites and music it would need to await a perfect gentleman."

"And you, Kung-hsi Ch'ih?"

"I would not call myself ready for office, but I should like to learn through holding one. I should like to be an assistant at the ancestral sacrifices and also at the formal general meetings and the daily meetings at the court."

"T'eng Tien?"

He gave a final strumming or two to his guitar, and then laying it down while it was still vibrating, he replied, "I would do things differently from the three others."

"That doesn't matter. Each is merely expressing his own mind."

"Well, when spring is over and its heavier clothing put away, along with five or six young men and six or seven lads, I like to bathe in the river Yi, air myself in the rain-dance, and then return home singing."

"I would join with T'eng Tien."

When the other three left, T'eng Tien remained behind and asked, "What do you think of what the three others said?"

"Each of them was merely expressing his own mind."

"Why did you smile in the case of Chung Yu?"

"A state is to be governed through the rites, but his words showed no humility; hence I smiled at him."

"In Jan Ch'iu's case there was no question of a state."

"Did you ever see even a small territory that wasn't a state?"

"Well then, in the case of Kung-hsi Ch'ih there was no state involved."

"Can ancestral sacrifices and formal general meetings mean anything other than a feudal lord? Yet, if Kung-hsi Ch'ih holds the low office, who would know enough to hold the high?"

# Chapter 12

YEN HUI . . .

[ 1 ]

When Yen Hui asked for a definition of manhood at its best, the Master replied, "The subduing of oneself and return to the practice of the rites constitute manhood at its best. If for one day you can conquer yourself and return to the practice of the rites, the world will acknowledge you as man at his best. The achieving of manhood at its best must come from you yourself; one does not acquire it from others!"

"What are the constituent parts of conquering oneself and returning to the rites?"

"Look at nothing which is contrary to the rites; listen to nothing contrary to them; speak nothing contrary thereto; do nothing contrary thereto."

"I am not very diligent, but this is exactly what I am going to do."



Jan Yung asked about manhood at its best  
“When away from home act as respectfully as you would toward an important guest; handle the people as respectfully as you would the grand sacrifice. Do not do to others what you would not desire yourself. Then you will have no enemies either in the state or in your own home.”

“I am not very diligent, but this is exactly what I am going to do.”

[ 3 ]

To Ssu-ma Li he said, “Man at his best is circumspect in what he says.”

“Is circumspection in speech sufficient for one to be known as man at his best?”

“What such a man is doing is difficult, so can he help but be circumspect in speaking of it?”

[ 4 ]

Ssu-ma Li asked about the perfect gentleman.  
“The perfect gentleman neither worries nor fears.”

“Is that sufficient for one to be known as a perfect gentleman?”

"If upon self-examination one is found free from fault, what is there to worry about or to fear?"

## [ 5 ]

Ssu-ma Li said worriedly, "All of you have brothers except me." Pu Shang replied, "What I have been taught is this: Life and death are governed by fate, and riches and honors depend upon Heaven. If the perfect gentleman is faultlessly respectful; if he is modest and courteous to others, then in the whole, wide world, all are his brothers. How can the perfect gentleman complain that he has no brothers?"

## [ 6 ]

Chuan-sun Shih asked for a definition of intelligence. "To be uninfluenced by slow-sleeping aspersions and superficial complaints may be called intelligence; it may be called transcendence."

## [ 7 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u inquired about the essentials of good government. "They are these: sufficient food, sufficient armament, and the confidence of the people."

"Suppose a necessity arose and, despite oneself, it was impossible to have all three. Which should be dispensed with first?"

"Armament."

"And if one of the remaining two had to be dispensed with?"

"Food. Everybody has always been subject to death, but without the confidence of the people there would be no government."

[ 8 ]

Chi Tzu-ch'eng declared, "The perfect gentleman consists solely of substance. What need has he of refinement?" T'uan-mu 'Tz'u then remarked, "Unfortunate indeed is your explanation of the perfect gentleman! It has been truly said that a four-horse team cannot overtake a man's tongue. Refinement is like substance and substance like refinement in the same way that leather from the skin of the tiger or leopard resembles leather from the skin of the dog or sheep. This is true only once the fur or decorative refinement has been removed!"

[ 9 ]

Duke Ai asked Yu Jo, "What is to be done when the harvest fails and our stocks are insufficient?"

"Why not levy a tax of one-tenth?"

"I find a tax of two-tenths insufficient, so what can I do about your suggestion?"

"When the people have sufficient, how can the prince fail to have enough? If the people do not have sufficient, how can the prince have enough?"

[ 10 ]

Chuan-sun Shih inquired about high moral conduct in its exalted form and about the clear understanding of utter confusion. "Exalted high moral conduct is the giving first place to loyalty and truthfulness and the turning to the practice of justice. Life is desired for those we love, and death for those we hate. When, however, at one and the same time we desire for them both life and death, we are in utter confusion. As *The Poems* say, 'I truly not for wealth, only indeed for a difference.' "

[ 11 ]

When Duke Ching of the state of Ch'i inquired about the characteristics of good government, the answer came, "Let the prince be and be treated as prince. Let the minister be and be treated as minister. Let the father be and be treated as the father. Let the son be and be treated as the son."

“Excellent! If things were not as you have just stated them, I might not succeed in eating even if there were an abundance of grain.”

[ 12 ]

“If anybody can decide a case when only one side has been heard, it is Chung Yu. He always gives his decisions immediately.”

[ 13 ]

“In hearing cases I am just like everybody else. The important thing, however, is to see to it that there are no cases!”

[ 14 ]

Chuan-sun Shih asked about government. “Let the official give himself no respite, and let all his acts be loyal.”

[ 15 ]

“Isn’t it true that by studying widely in the books, but keeping it all within bounds by adhering to the code of rites, one will thus commit no transgression?”

## [ 16 ]

"The perfect gentleman develops the virtues in others, not their vices. The mean man does just the opposite."

## [ 17 ]

Regarding government Confucius said to Chi-sun Fei, "By etymology, the one engaged in government (*cheng*) corrects and is himself correct (*cheng*). If you are all correctness in your leadership, who would dare not be likewise?"

## [ 18 ]

Chi-sun Fei complained to Confucius about robberies. "If you yourself had no desires, people would not steal even for pay."

## [ 19 ]

On another occasion Chi-sun Fei inquired, "Suppose I slay those who do not follow 'The Right Way, so that only the followers thereof are left?'"

"Why do any slaying in your exercise of government? If you yourself desire only excellence, the people will indeed be excellent. The high moral conduct of the prince may be compared to the

wind; that of the people, to the grass. When the grass is put upon by the wind, it must bend."

[ 20 ]

Chuan-sun Shih inquired under what conditions a gentleman could be said to have achieved perfection. "What do you mean by perfection?"

"To have a good reputation both in the state and within one's own home."

"This is reputation; it's not perfection. The one who has achieved perfection is upright in his very substance and fond of justice. While watching his every word and facial expression, he is concerned with placing himself below others. Then both in the state and within his own home he is considered perfect. The man with merely a reputation assumes the attitude of manhood at its best, but his every action belies it. Nevertheless, within himself he never doubts but that he is man at his best. Thus he has a good reputation both in the state and within his own home."

[ 21 ]

One day when Fan Hsü was walking in the Master's suite at the rain-dance locale he inquired about high moral conduct in its exalted form, amelioration

of vices, and the clear understanding of utter confusion. "What excellent questions! Consider your job of prime importance; put the reward in second place. Wouldn't this be high moral conduct in its exalted form? 'To war against one's own bad points and not against the bad points of others. Wouldn't this be amelioration of vices? In a moment's burst of anger to forget oneself and one's family. Wouldn't this be utter confusion?"

## [ 22 ]

In answer to Fan Hsü's questions the Master said, "To love others is manhood at its best. To know men is to have knowledge." Since this was not yet clear to him, the Master continued, "If you will appoint upright persons to the places now held by the crooked, you will be making the crooked straight."

Then Fan Hsü retired and reported the conversation to Pu Shang. "What did he mean?" inquired Fan Hsü.

"Rich indeed are those words of his! When Shun ruled the world, making his selection from the whole group, he elevated Kao Yao to high position, and those who were not men at their best were set aside. When T'ang the Victorious, founder of the Yin



dynasty, ruled the world, he too, choosing from the whole group, elevated I Yin to high position, and those who were not men at their best were set aside."

## [ 23 ]

To Tuan-mu Tz'u regarding friends: "In all loyalty pointing out their good and bad points, be skillful in bringing them into the good path. If they disapprove, desist. Don't go so far as to shame yourself in their eyes."

## [ 24 ]

Tseng Ts'an once said, "The perfect gentleman uses the books to bring together friends, and through friendships he bolsters up manhood at its best."

# Chapter 13

CHUNG YU . . .

[ 1 ]

To Chung Yu, on government. "Require of others only what you have first taught them." When he asked for additional guidance he was told, "Never grow weary."

[ 2 ]

When Jan Yung was administrator for the Chis he asked about government. "You must first place people in charge of various matters, then pardon any slight mistakes, and promote those of the highest caliber and those with talents."

"How shall I recognize the talented and those of the highest caliber that I may promote them?"

"Promote those that you actually know to be such. Those you do not know personally others will mention to you."

## [ 3 ]

Chung Yu said, "If the Prince of Wei is waiting for the Master to administer his government, what will you place first on your agenda?"

"The indispensable is to render designations correct."

"Do you really mean that? You're getting far afield! Why would you correct them?"

"How crude Chung Yu is! In regard to what he doesn't know the perfect gentleman, I should say, abstains. If the designations are not correct, language will not be clear. If language is not clear, duties will not be carried out. If duties are not carried out, rites and music will not flourish. If rites and music do not flourish, then punishments will not be specific. If punishments are not specific, then the people will do nothing without getting into trouble. Hence when the perfect gentleman has given something a name it may with all certainty be expressed in language; when he expresses it, it may with certainty be set in operation. In regard to his language the perfect gentleman is never careless in any respect."

## [ 4 ]

Fan Hsü wanted to study agriculture with the

Master, but the latter said, "You had better see an old farmer." When the same man sought to study gardening with him: "You had better see an old gardener."

When Fan Hsü left, the Master said, "He is a mean man. When those at the top are fond of the rites, the people will of necessity be respectful; when justice is observed at the top, the people will be submissive; when truth reigns at the top, the people will be sincere. Then, when a situation like this prevails, people from all over will move to that place carrying the children on their backs. What good is agriculture?"

## [ 5 ]

"Suppose a man can recite all three hundred of *The Poems*, but when he is given a position in the government he is unsuccessful. Suppose he is then sent on missions to the various states, but proves unable to make replies on his own. Even though he does know many poems, why continue to employ him?"

## [ 6 ]

"If the official is himself upright, the people will

play their rôles without orders; if he is not upright, even under orders the people will be disobedient.”

## [ 7 ]

“The governments of Lu and Wei may be considered brothers, since their fiefs were founded by brothers.”

## [ 8 ]

Regarding Kung-tzu-ching of Wei: “He knows how to enjoy his home. When he first began to have things he would say, ‘This is just about right.’ When he had a bit more he would say, ‘This is just about enough.’ When he became rich he would say, ‘This is just about perfection.’ ”

## [ 9 ]

When the Master went to Wei, Jan Ch’iu did the driving. “What a large population!”

“Since the people are already numerous, what more will you add to them?”

“I will enrich them.”

“And then?”

“I will instruct them.”

[ 10 ]

"If some ruler would employ me, in a month I should have my system working; in three years everything would be running smoothly."

[ 11 ]

"If the able man were to govern a place for one hundred years, he could indeed subdue the evil and dispense with killings. 'This saying is certainly true!'"

[ 12 ]

"If there were a true king upon the throne of China, unquestionably manhood at its best would prevail within one generation."

[ 13 ]

"If a man has rendered himself correct, he will have no trouble governing. If he cannot render himself correct, how can he correct others?" (Turn to 12.17.)

[ 14 ]

Jan Ch'iu returned from the court. "Why are you late?"

"There was a conference."

"You mean there was some ordinary business to be taken care of. If there had been a conference, I should have been informed along with the rest of you, even though I do not have a post in the government."

## [ 15 ]

Duke Ting inquired whether there was one word by which the state could be made prosperous. "Speech does not enjoy that much precision. But it is commonly said, 'Just as it is hard to be a prince, so it is not easy to be an official.' If you know the difficulties of being a prince, you are very close to rendering your country prosperous with one word."

"Is there one word which could bring my state to nought?"

"Speech does not enjoy that much precision. But it is commonly said, 'I do not like being prince, but let no one act contrary to my word.' If it is something good and no one acts contrary to it, excellent! If it is something evil and no one acts contrary to it, you will be quite close to bringing your state to nought with one word."

## [ 16 ]

When Shen Chu-liang inquired about good gov-

ernment, the Master replied, "It exists when those at hand are pleased and those far away draw near."

## [ 17 ]

When in charge of Chü-fu, Pu Shang asked about government. "Don't seek for haste, and don't concern yourself about little advantages. If you desire haste, you will not achieve perfection. If you have an eye to little advantages, the big things will not get done."

## [ 18 ]

Shen Chu-liang one day remarked to Confucius, "In my town there is a person so upright that when his father stole a sheep, he, the son, testified against him."

"The upright folk in my town are different from this. The father in such a case would conceal the son, and the son would conceal the father. Uprightness indeed lies therein."

## [ 19 ]

Fan Hsü asked about manhood at its best. "At home be modest; at work be respectful; with others



be loyal. Even among the barbarians you may not abandon these precepts."

[ 20 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u inquired, "What must a man be like to merit the title of gentleman?"

"The man who personally has a sense of shame and does not dishonor the commands of his prince when he is sent on missions to other states—such a man may be called a gentleman."

"What is next in descending order?"

"The man who is known in his clan for filial piety, and in his village for his fraternal piety."

"Who comes below that?"

"The one who is unyielding in the demand that words be always truthful and deeds always fruitful—the mean man!—he, indeed, may be considered to come next."

"What would you say of those who are in government today?"

"M-m-m, how can we reckon with such half-pints?"

[ 21 ]

"If I can't find moderate men to deal with, I must turn to the presumptuous and the timid. The

former will progress and seize upon what I have to offer; the latter will hesitate to do some things."

## [ 22 ]

"The southerners have a saying which goes, 'If a man lacks constancy, he cannot be a fortuneteller or a doctor.' Good, isn't it? Now given the statement in the diviners' *Book of Changes*: 'If a man's high moral conduct lacks constancy, he may incur disgrace,' failure to strive for constancy simply means that one has not used the book of divination."

## [ 23 ]

"The perfect gentleman is accommodating, but he is not one of the crowd. The mean man is one of the crowd, but he is also a source of discord."

## [ 24 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u inquired, "What do you say of a man who is liked by all his townsfolk?"

"I would not find him acceptable solely for that reason."

"Suppose all his townsfolk disliked him?"

"I would not reject him solely for that reason."

It is better that the good people of the town like him, and that the bad dislike him."

[ 25 ]

"The perfect gentleman is easy to serve but hard to please. If in your efforts to please him you stoop to what is not The Right Way, he will not be pleased. He employs men for special tasks according to their capacities. The mean man is hard to serve but easy to please. In your efforts to please him, he will be pleased even if you stoop to what is not The Right Way. When he employs men, he expects them to be capable of anything."

[ 26 ]

"The perfect gentleman is dignified but not proud. The mean man is proud but not dignified."

[ 27 ]

"He who is unflinching, bold, simple and natural, and unhurried approximates manhood at its best."

[ 28 ]

Chung Yu asked, "What must a man be like to merit the title of gentleman?"

“The man who is frank, meticulous, and accommodating may be called a gentleman. Friends are frank and meticulous; brothers are accommodating.”

[ 29 ]

“If an able man were to instruct the people for seven years, they could indeed be used in warfare immediately thereafter!”

[ 30 ]

“Leading an uninstructed people to war is to throw them away.”

# Chapter 14

YÜAN HSIEN . . .

[ 1 ]

Yüan Hsien inquired about what was shameful. "When a state is following The Right Way, one enters its pay. If one enters the pay of a state which is not following The Right Way, it is shameful."

"If a man does not insist on always being a winner, and if he is not given to boasting, petty dislikes, and inordinate desires, may he be considered to be man at his best?"

"He may be said to be engaging in difficult undertakings, but I am not sure that he is man at his best."

[ 2 ]

"The gentleman who prefers his own case is no gentleman."

## [ 3 ]

"If a state is following 'The Right Way, you may both speak and act boldly. If it is not, let your acts be bold but your speech accommodating."

## [ 4 ]

"The man of high moral conduct will always have something to say, but those who do speak are not necessarily men of high moral conduct. Man at his best will be courageous, but all the courageous are not necessarily man at his best."

## [ 5 ]

Nan-kung Kua asked Confucius, "Yi of the Hsia dynasty was a clever archer, and Ao moved a boat which was resting on dry land. Yet both of these men died before their time. On the other hand, Yü the Great and Chi both engaged personally in agriculture, and both rose to become rulers. Why is this?" The Master did not reply.

When his visitor had left the Master remarked, "A man like that is a perfect gentleman, for he esteems high moral conduct."



“Yi of the Hsia dynasty was a clever archer.” [Chapter  
14, verse 5]

## [ 6 ]

"Isn't it true that there are cases where an individual is not man at his best despite the fact that he is a perfect gentleman? There are, however, no cases of a mean man being man at his best."

## [ 7 ]

"Can we help requiring much of those we love? Can we help instructing those towards whom we would be loyal?"

## [ 8 ]

"When decrees were drawn up, Pi Ch'en prepared the rough draft; Yu Chi discussed it; the Grand Receptionist Kung-sun Hui revised it; and Kung-sun Ch'iao of 'Tung-li gave it literary elegance."

## [ 9 ]

Somebody asked about Kung-sun Ch'iao. "He was gracious towards others."

Of Tzu-hsi he said, "That fellow!"

Of Kuan Chung, the famous statesman of Ch'i, "He was like this: Although he took Pien, a town of three hundred homes, from Lord Po, so that the



latter was reduced to a vegetable diet, to his dying day he did not utter one word of resentment against Kuan Chung."

## [ 10 ]

"To feel no resentment though poor is difficult; not to be proud though rich is easy."

## [ 11 ]

"Meng-kung Ch'o would be excellent if he were an official of the small principalities Chao or Wei, but he may not be used as a grand gentleman of such states as T'eng or Hsüeh."

## [ 12 ]

Chung Yu asked about the accomplished man. "Anybody who combined the wisdom of Tsang-sun Ho, the desirelessness of Meng-kung Ch'o, the courage of Chuang-tzu of Pien, and the arts of Jan Ch'iu with a finish drawn from the rites and music may be considered to have been the accomplished man. But why must the accomplished man of today be like that? In the face of profit let him think of justice. In the face of danger let him offer his own life. In the face of long-standing obligations let him

not forget his words of long ago. Then he may be considered the accomplished man."

## [ 13 ]

In asking Kung-ming Chia about Kung-sun Chih the Master said, "Is it true that he neither spoke, smiled, nor took?"

"Your informant has exaggerated. When the time was right he spoke, and people did not weary of his words. When happy he smiled, but people did not weary of it. When it was proper he took things, but people did not weary of his taking."

"Like that. He couldn't have been like that!"

## [ 14 ]

"Tsang-sun Ho, from Fang, asked that his brother Wei be recognized as sacrificer to the family's ancestors in Lu. Although it is claimed that he brought no pressure to bear against our prince, I do not believe it."

## [ 15 ]

"Because of his lies Duke Wen of Chin must be considered not upright. Because of his uprightness Duke Huan of Ch'i did not lie."

## [ 16 ]

Chung Yu said, "When Duke Huan of Ch'i slew his younger brother Chiu, the latter's friend Shao Hu followed him in death, but his other friend Kuan Chung did not. Would you say it was because he had not yet achieved manhood at its best?"

"Duke Huan nine times assembled the lords of China without the use of weapons or war chariots; this was thanks to Kuan Chung. Now as for his being man at his best . . . m-m-m."

## [ 17 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u said, "Kuan Chung was not manhood at its best! When Duke Huan slew Chiu, he not only failed to follow his friend in death, but he also became the slayer's prime minister."

"Because Kuan Chung was his minister, Duke Huan became chief of the lords of China and brought the world completely to a state of rectitude, so that to this very day the people enjoy his gifts. Without Kuan Chung we should be wearing our hair down our backs and not in the top-knot, and our garments would open on the left instead of on the right. He was not like that miserable fellow who showed a blind fidelity by strangling himself at the

side of a ditch, so that he has become unknown to the world."

## [ 18 ]

Kung-sun Chih's steward, name Chuan, accompanied him to the duke's. "He was indeed a cultivated man and deserving of his title."

## [ 19 ]

The Master happened to mention that Duke Ling of Wei did not follow The Right Way. Thereupon Chi-sun I'ci spoke up, "If he's like that, why hasn't he come to nought?"

"K'ung Yü is in charge of his guests; Prayer-leader T'o, in charge of his ancestral temple; Wang-sun Chia heads his army. Under such circumstances, why should he come to nought?"

## [ 20 ]

"Whose language is unrestrained will have difficulty doing it all."

## [ 21 ]

When Ch'en Heng had murdered Duke Chien, Confucius bathed both head and body and went to

the court. He announced to Duke Ai, "Ch'en Heng has murdered his prince; I think he should be punished."

"Tell it to the three lords who control everything in our state."

"As the descendant of a grand gentleman, I was obliged to abide by the rites and inform my prince. Now you instruct me to inform the three lords." He did so, and they disapproved his suggestion. Confucius then repeated, "As the descendant of a grand gentleman I was obliged to abide by the rites and inform my prince."

[ 22 ]

Chung Yu asked how to serve a prince. "Don't deceive him! Resist him rather."

[ 23 ]

"The perfect gentleman reaches complete understanding of the main issues; the mean man reaches complete understanding of the petty details."

[ 24 ]

"Formerly men studied for self-improvement; today men study for the sake of appearances."

[ 25 ]

Ch'ü Yüan sent a messenger to Confucius, who sat down with him and inquired about his master, "Why has he sent you?"

"My master is desirous of lessening his faults, but he has not yet succeeded."

When the messenger left the Master said, "A messenger! He sends a messenger!"

[ 26 ]

"Do not interfere in the other man's job." Tseng Ts'an expressed it, "The perfect gentleman keeps his mind on his own job."

[ 27 ]

"The perfect gentleman is sparing in words but prodigal in deeds."

[ 28 ]

"The perfect gentleman follows a tripartite path in none of which do I qualify: manhood at its best, which has no concerns; wisdom, which has no doubts; courage, which is fearless." But Tuan-mu Tz'u spoke up, "The Master is his own path."

## [ 29 ]

T'uan-mu T'z'u criticized some people. "Is he then a man of the highest caliber? If he were like me he wouldn't have time for criticism."

## [ 30 ]

"Be not concerned over men's not knowing of you; be concerned rather over your inabilities."

## [ 31 ]

"Not to anticipate fraud, and not to expect falsehood, yet at the same time to be the first to perceive their presence—that is to be a man of the highest caliber!"

## [ 32 ]

Said Wei-sheng Mu, "Why do you keep flitting from one place to another? It must be to display your eloquence!"

"I wouldn't dare do it to display eloquence. It's because I can't stand stubbornness in those I try to convince."

## [ 33 ]

"A steed is not praised for its might, but for its high quality."

## [ 34 ]

Somebody asked, "What would you say of using high moral conduct to repay those who hate you?"

"How then will you repay high moral conduct? Do what is correct to repay those who hate you, and do good in return for good."

## [ 35 ]

"Isn't it true that nobody knows of me?" Tuan-mu Tz'u spoke up, "How is it that nobody knows of you?"

"I feel no resentment toward Heaven, and I do not blame men. But now that I have studied to the point of understanding everything, the one who knows of me is Heaven!"

## [ 36 ]

Kung-po Liao filed a complaint with the Chi-suns against their steward Chung Yu. Tzu-fu Ho reported this as follows: "Owing to Kung-po Liao strong suspicions have been raised against your pupil Chung Yu, but I still have enough power to see that Kung-po Liao's corpse is exposed in the public square."

"It is fate that will determine whether The Right



Way prevails or fails. What is a Kung-po Liao in the face of fate?"

[ 37 ]

"Men of the highest caliber avoid political life completely. Those in the next lower category will move from a disordered place to one which is well governed. The next lower category will move away from sham; and the next lower category, because of something that has been said. Only seven people fall into these categories!"

[ 38 ]

When Chung Yu arrived to spend the night at Shih-men the gatekeeper asked, "Where are you coming from?"

"From Confucius's."

"There's a man who is undertaking something even though he knows it can't be done!"

[ 39 ]

One day in Wei when the Master was playing the stone gongs a man with a basket passed by the gateway and said, "He plays with great feeling!" When the playing stopped he remarked, "How petty! How stubborn! Despite the fact that nobody

knows of him, he just persists in having faith in himself. We must adapt ourselves in this world! 'When the water at the ford is deep, I use the stepping-stones. When it is shallow, I lift my skirt.'"

"Naturally! He has no problems at all."

[ 40 ]

Chuan-sun Shih inquired, "In *The Writings of Old* it is said, 'King Kao-tsung of the Yin dynasty truly went into retirement and for three years did not utter a word.' What does this mean?"

"Why emphasize Kao-tsung? The men of old all did that. When their prince died, the successor went into mourning for three years, and the various officials, while tending the duties of their offices, took their orders from the prime minister for three years."

[ 41 ]

"If those at the top are fond of the rites, the people are easy to direct."

[ 42 ]

Chung Yu asked how to become a perfect gentleman. "Stay respectful as you work at self-improvement."

"Is that all?"

"As you work at self-improvement let others feel secure."

"Is that all?"

"As you work at self-improvement bring security to all the people. But even Yao and Shun found this difficult!"

[ 43 ]

Yüan Jang remained crouched in Confucius's presence. "Not to be obedient while a child; not to set a good example when grown up; and not to die when one has grown old; this is to lead the life of a thief!" Thereupon he struck him on the leg with his staff.

[ 44 ]

A lad from the village of Ch'üch acted as the Master's messenger, and somebody asked him, "Is he benefiting from such distinguished surroundings?"

"I observe him sitting in the grownups' places, and I observe him walking side by side with his elders. He's not looking for improvement. He wants to grow up quickly."

# Chapter 15

## DUKE LING OF WEI . . .

### [ 1 ]

Duke Ling of Wei asked about the alignment of an army. "I have been taught about the utensils used in the rites, but I never learned military tactics." The next day he left.

### [ 2 ]

In Ch'en, owing to warfare, Confucius and his party were cut off from food. His followers fell so ill that they could not rise. Chung Yu then became angry and said, "Can perfect gentlemen, too, be reduced to the last extremity?"

"The perfect gentleman can indeed be reduced to the last extremity, but when the mean man is so reduced he loses all self-control."

## [ 3 ]

"Tuan-mu Tz'u, do you think of me as a man who knows about things as the result of wide study?"

"Yes. Am I wrong?"

"Yes. I have one thing, and upon it all the rest is strung." (Turn to 4.15.)

## [ 4 ]

"Chung Yu, those who know about high moral conduct are indeed few."

## [ 5 ]

"As for governing without interfering in the petty details, Shun was the man who could do that! Why? He merely kept himself humble and his face turned due south, the recognized position of the true king."

## [ 6 ]

Chuan-sun Shih asked what he should practice. "Let your speech be loyal and truthful; your actions, sincere and respectful. Even among the barbarians you can do this. On the other hand, if your speech is not loyal and truthful, and your actions not sincere and respectful, you will not be able to carry on either over a wide area or in a town. When you are

standing, imagine that you can see these principles present as your companions. When you are in your carriage, imagine that you see them leaning against the cross-pole. In this way you will come to practice them." Chuan-sun Shih wrote this down on his sash.

## [ 7 ]

"Upright indeed was astrologer Yü! If the state was following 'The Right Way, he recorded it precisely; if not, he also recorded it precisely. A perfect gentleman was Ch'ü Yüan! If the state was following The Right Way, he took office; if not, he knew how to roll up his wisdom and stick it in his bosom."

## [ 8 ]

"If we fail to speak with a man who can be spoken with, we lose a man. If we do speak with a man who cannot be spoken with, our words go for nought. 'The wise lose neither man nor words.'"

## [ 9 ]

"The strong-willed gentleman who is manhood at its best never seeks life at the expense of manhood at its best, but there are cases where his life is given for the accomplishment of manhood at its best."

## [ 10 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u inquired how to become manhood at its best. "When the workman wishes to do a better job, he must first sharpen his tools. So, in your case, no matter what state you inhabit, serve only the grand gentlemen of highest caliber, make friends only with those gentlemen who are manhood at its best."

## [ 11 ]

Yüan Hui inquired how to govern a state. "Use the Hsia calendar. Ride in a Yin carriage. Wear a Chou hat. When there is music, let it be that of Shun. Banish the songs of Cheng, and keep away from the eloquent, for the songs of Cheng are depraved and the eloquent are dangerous."

## [ 12 ]

"If a man does not give thought to problems which are still distant, he will be worried by them when they get nearer."

## { 13 }

"The end has indeed come! I have yet to meet a man as fond of high moral conduct as he is of outward appearances."

[ 14 ]

“Did Tsang-sun Ch'en play the rôle of a thief in the position which he held? I should say that he did, for despite the fact that he knew that Chan Huo was a man of the highest caliber, he did not have him as a colleague.”

[ 15 ]

“If a man is sparing in his reproaches of others while he heaps them up on himself, he will certainly keep resentments afar.”

[ 16 ]

“I can do absolutely nothing for the man who will not bring me his problems.”

[ 17 ]

“Those who can be in a group all day and, without speaking of justice, give themselves over solely to their own little kindnesses—such people would certainly have difficulty achieving the ideal I set.”

[ 18 ]

“He whose very substance is justice; whose actions are governed by the rites; whose participation in



affairs is compliant; and whose crowning perfection is truthfulness—that man is a perfect gentleman.”

[ 19 ]

“The perfect gentleman complains about his own inabilities; not about people’s ignorance of himself.”

[ 20 ]

“The perfect gentleman’s concern is that he may die without a good name.”

[ 21 ]

“The perfect gentleman demands it of himself; the mean man, of others.”

[ 22 ]

“The perfect gentleman, out of a sense of pride, does not engage in strifes; out of consideration for the group as a whole he does not join cliques.”

[ 23 ]

“The perfect gentleman does not accept a man for his words alone; he does not reject a suggestion because of the man alone.”

[ 24 ]

T'uan-mu Tz'u inquired, "Is there one word that will keep us on the path to the end of our days?"

"Yes. Reciprocity! What you do not wish yourself, do not unto others."

[ 25 ]

"I approach others with neither blame nor praise in my heart. If I do praise anybody, it is after having tried him out. Through such an attitude toward their people, the three dynasties have traveled the straight path."

[ 26 ]

"In my time I have come upon an astrologer who, when in doubt, would record nothing, and a horse owner who would get others to break in his stock. But such people no longer exist today, do they?"

[ 27 ]

"Just as a clever remark can ruin another's high moral conduct, so, if there is the slightest impatience, a grand scheme can be ruined."

[ 28 ]

"If everybody dislikes it, it must be looked into. If everybody likes it, it must be looked into."

[ 29 ]

"A man can make The Right Way great; it isn't The Right Way which makes a man great."

[ 30 ]

"Not to alter one's faults is to be faulty indeed."

[ 31 ]

"I once went all day without food and all night without sleep just to think. I found no advantage in it; it's best to study."

[ 32 ]

"The perfect gentleman schemes regarding The Right Way, not regarding the earning of a living! Agriculture is inspired by the fear of hunger; study, by an interest in salary. The perfect gentleman is concerned about The Right Way, not about poverty!"

[ 33 ]

"If a man's knowledge reaches as far as the secret of good government, but his manhood at its best is incapable of maintaining it, despite his getting it, he shall lose it. If his knowledge reaches that far

and his manhood at its best is able to maintain it, but he directs it without vigor, the people will not be respectful. If his knowledge reaches that far and his manhood at its best can maintain it and he directs it vigorously, but in applying it he does not follow the rites—that man is not yet competent.”

## [ 34 ]

“The perfect gentleman gives his approval not to techniques but to the capacity for great responsibility. The mean man does just the opposite.”

## [ 35 ]

“Manhood at its best is of greater importance to the people than either fire or water. I have seen fire and water cause deaths, but I have never seen manhood at its best cause them.”

## [ 36 ]

“He who is manhood at its best does not make way for the teacher.”

## [ 37 ]

“The perfect gentleman does not show a blind fidelity in his practice of uprightness.”

[ 38 ]

"As you serve your prince give precedence to his interest; think of your pay last."

[ 39 ]

"Where there is instruction there are no castes."

[ 40 ]

"Those who follow different roads cannot take counsel with one another."

[ 41 ]

"It is enough that one's words express fully one's thought."

[ 42 ]

When the maestro Mien, who was blind, came on a visit, upon his reaching the steps the Master said, "Here are the steps." When he reached the mat, "Here's the mat." When they had seated themselves, "So-and-so is here, and so-and-so is here." When the guest had gone, Chuan-sun Shih inquired, "Is that the proper way to talk with maestros, all of whom are blind?"

"Yes. This is the proper way to lead maestros."

# Chapter 16

## THE CHIS . . .

### [ 1 ]

When the Chis of Lu were about to attack the state of Chuan-yü, Jan Ch'iu and Chung Yu sought an interview with Confucius and reported, "The Chis are about to have an incident with Chuan-yü."

"Jan Ch'iu, this is your fault! Of old, our former kings looked upon the Chuan-yü as the chiefs of Tung-meng, and they were situated within the confines of our state of Lu. They are, then, natives of our state. Why are they to be attacked?"

"Our prince desires it; neither of us wants it."

"Jan Ch'iu, the astrologer Chou Jen used to say, 'Let the strong ones in the host enter the line; let the incompetent desist!' Of what use are counselors who do not uphold and support a state when it is endangered or when it is tottering? Further, your reasoning is erroneous. Whose fault is it when the tiger or the wild bull escapes its pen, or when the

tortoise or the valued gem is damaged in its box?"

"Yes, but today those Chuan-yü are strong and close to Pi, an important city of the Chis. If they are not taken today, later on they will certainly be a source of concern for our descendants."

"Isn't it true, Jan Ch'iu, that the perfect gentleman dislikes to yield and say, 'It must be done because it is desired'? For my part, I have been taught that the head of a state or the head of a family is not concerned about numbers; he is concerned about misapportionments. He is not concerned about poverty, but about insecurity. Perhaps I may put it this way: Where there is apportionment there is no poverty. Where there is harmony the number is sufficient. Where security reigns there are no troubles. But when, under the circumstances you describe, men at a distance do not submit, we attract them through our refinement and high moral conduct. Once they have been attracted, we give them security. Today you, Chung Yu and Jan Ch'iu, are the prince's ministers. Distant people, not being submissive, cannot be attracted. Our country is tumbling and splitting up to the point that it is impossible to preserve it. Yet troop movements within our state have been counseled. I fear that the concerns of the Chis are not with the Chuan-yü but with their own council."

## [ 2 ]

“When the world is following The Right Way, then the rites, the music, punitive expeditions, and attacks are all determined by the Son of Heaven, that is, the king; otherwise, these things emanate from the feudal lords. When they emanate from the feudal lords they will probably last ten generations. If it’s from the grand gentlemen, they will last five generations; a family steward can control the destinies of a realm for three generations. But if the world is following The Right Way, affairs will not be in the hands of the grand gentlemen, and ordinary men will not be criticizing the state.”

## [ 3 ]

“Officials in Lu have not been employed by the legitimate ducal line of the state for five generations; affairs have been in the hands of the grand gentlemen for four generations. Hence these descendants of Duke Huan of Ch’i are weakening.”

## [ 4 ]

“Three friends benefit us; three, harm us. The upright friend, the devoted, and the learned benefit us. The fawning friend, the flattering, and the too eloquent harm us.”



## [ 5 ]

“Three pleasures benefit us; three, harm us. The pleasure of keeping to the restraints of the rites and the music, of speaking of others’ competencies, of having many friends of the highest caliber benefit us. The pleasure of reveling in pleasures, in idle wandering, in the delights of the banquet table harm us.”

## [ 6 ]

“When attending upon a prince, you are subject to three errors: speaking before spoken to, which is called overhaste; not to reply when spoken to, which is called reticence; speaking without observing his facial expression, which is called blindness.”

## [ 7 ]

“The perfect gentleman avoids three things: sexual intercourse while still too young and before his blood and breaths have settled down; fighting, once he has grown up and his blood and breaths have squared off and become strong; further acquisition, once he has grown old and his blood and breaths have weakened.”

## [ 8 ]

"There are three things of which the perfect gentleman stands in awe: the commands of Heaven; important people; the words of the sages. The mean man, not knowing the commands of Heaven, does not stand in awe of them; he is disrespectful to important people; he mocks the words of the sages."

## [ 9 ]

"Those born with an understanding of the universe belong to the highest type of humanity. Those who understand it as the result of study come second. Those who study it with great difficulty come third. Because, owing to the difficulty, they do not study, the people come last."

## [ 10 ]

"There are nine things of which the perfect gentleman must be mindful: to see when he looks; to hear when he listens; to have a facial expression of gentleness; to have an attitude of humility; to be loyal in speech; to be respectful in service; to inquire when in doubt; to think of the difficulties when angry; to think of justice when he sees an advantage."

## [ 11 ]

"I have seen and heard of men who, upon espying competence, strove with might and main to equal it; others who, catching sight of incompetence, withdrew as though they were pulling their hand out of boiling water. I have heard of men living in retirement from active life in order to achieve what they desired most. I have heard of them doing what was right in order to perfect their way of life. I have yet, however, to meet such men."

## [ 12 ]

Duke Ching of Ch'i possessed one thousand teams of horses, but on the day he died the people could find no high moral conduct of his to praise. Po-i and Shu-ch'i died of hunger at the foot of Mt. Shou-yang, and the people praise them to the present day. Is the following line from *The Poems* a reference to such a situation: "Truely not for wealth, only indeed for a difference"?

## [ 13 ]

Ch'en K'ang inquired of Confucius's son K'ung Li, "Has your father taught you differently than he did us?"

"Not yet. But one day when he was standing alone and I was passing quickly through the courtyard, he said, 'Have you studied *The Poems*?' 'Not yet,' I replied. 'Well,' said he, 'if you don't study *The Poems* you won't be able to carry on a conversation.' So I withdrew and studied *The Poems*. Another day the same situation was repeated and he asked, 'Have you studied the rites?' And I replied, 'Not yet.' He continued, 'If you don't study the rites, you will not be able to play your proper rôle.' So I withdrew and studied the rites. I have been taught these two things."

Ch'en K'ang withdrew and was quite happy as he said, "From one question I have gotten three things. I have learned about *The Poems*; I have learned about the rites; I have learned of the gulf which the perfect gentleman keeps between himself and his son."

[ 14 ] ' .

The wife of a prince is called Lady by her husband. She calls herself Child. The people call her The Prince's Lady. When she is mentioned to officials of another state she is called Our Princess. When people of another state mention her, they too say The Prince's Lady.

# Chapter 17

YANG HU . . .

[ 1 ]

Yang Hu wanted to receive Confucius, and when he did not go, he sent him a suckling pig. Confucius then went to call upon him, after choosing a moment when he would not be at home, but he met him along the way. Yang Hu then said, "Come! Let you and me have a talk. Can we call a person manhood at its best if he lets his state wallow in confusion while he keeps a jewel of wisdom concealed within his bosom?" •

"No."

"Can we call a man wise if he is prompt to miss every opportunity when he really likes to do things?"

"No."

"The days and months are indeed passing, and the years play no favorites!"

"You're right. I'll take a public office."

## [ 2 ]

"In our natures we approximate one another; habits put us farther and farther apart.

"The only ones who do not change are sages and idiots."

## [ 3 ]

On arriving at Wu-ch'eng the Master heard a song accompanied by a guitar, and he smiled, saying, "Why use the heaviest axe to kill a chicken when a hatchet serves better the purpose?" Yen Yen then spoke up, "A long time ago I heard the Master say this: 'As a result of his study of The Right Way the perfect gentleman comes to love others; the mean man from such study is easier to direct.' "

"My pupils, Yen Yen is right. That remark of mine was made only in jest."

## [ 4 ]

When Kung-shan Fu-pan revolted at Pi, he summoned the Master, and he wanted to go. Chung Yu, however, was displeased and said, "You've never gone to anybody else! Why must you go to Mr. Kung-shan?"

"He certainly isn't summoning me to no purpose!

If he would put me to work, I should rear a Chou dynasty here in the East!"

## [ 5 ]

Chuan-sun Shih asked about manhood at its best. "He who in this world can practice five things may indeed be considered man at his best."

"What are they?"

"Humility, magnanimity, truthfulness, diligence, and kindness. If you are humble, you will not be laughed at. If you are magnanimous, you will attract many to your side. If you are truthful, people will trust you. If you are diligent, you will be successful. If you are kind, you will get along well with your subordinates."

## [ 6 ]

When Pi Hsi of the Chin state summoned him, the Master wanted to go. Chung Yu then said, "Long ago I heard the Master say this: 'The perfect gentleman does not enter the home of the man who is personally evil.' Now, since Pi Hsi is in revolt at Chung-mou, how can you go there?"

"You're right. I said that. But isn't it also said, 'What is really hard cannot be made thin by rub-

bing; what is really white does not become black by dyeing? Am I to be hung up and left uneaten like some gourds?"

## [ 7 ]

"Chung Yu, have you learned about the six sayings which are induced by six defects?"

"Not yet."

"Stay, and I'll tell you. To be fond of manhood at its best but not of learning: stupidity. To be fond of wisdom but not of learning: vagrancy. To be fond of truthfulness but not of learning: banditry. To be fond of uprightness but not of learning: brusqueness. To be fond of acts of courage but not of learning: rebelliousness. To be fond of steadfastness but not of learning: madness."

## [ 8 ]

"My pupils, why do none of you study these poems? Through *The Poems* minds can be aroused, a point of vantage gained, sociability exercised, resentments expressed, one's father and one's prince served, and one's knowledge increased in respect to the names of birds, animals, plants, and trees." And turning to his son K'ung Li he continued, "Have you learned the first two sections of *The*



Poems? Any man who hasn't is right face against a brick wall!"

## [ 9 ]

"By rites we certainly don't mean gems and silks! And by music we certainly don't mean bells and drums! These are merely the externals."

## [ 10 ]

"Those who are outwardly strict but inwardly lax may be compared with the mean man. They may be compared with the burglar who climbs or pierces our walls!"

## [ 11 ]

"Continuous readaptation to suit the whims of others undermines high moral conduct."

## [ 12 ]

"To engage in gossip is to cast aside high moral conduct."

## [ 13 ]

"It's impossible to serve the prince with a lowly colleague! Before getting the post he will be fearful

of getting it, and once he gets it he will be fearful of losing it. Being foolishly fearful of losing it, there are no ends to which he will not go."

## [ 14 ]

"The people of old had three defects which are probably lacking today. The presumptuous among the ancients were venturesome; in the present they are vagrant. The proud among the ancients were straightforward; in the present they are quarrelsome. The stupid among the ancients were upright; those of the present are merely cheaters."

## [ 15 ]

"Clever talk and domineering manner have little to do with being man at his best."

## [ 16 ]

"I dislike the way the clever talker upsets states and homes, just as I dislike purple's encroachment upon red and the way the tunes of Cheng have played riot with elegant music."

## [ 17 ]

"I prefer to say nothing." Then Tuan-mu Tz'u

spoke up, "If the Master says nothing, how shall we transmit him?"

"Heaven says nothing! Yet the four seasons proceed under its sway, and all creation comes into being thanks to it. Heaven says nothing!"

[ 18 ]

When Ju Pei sought an interview Confucius excused himself on the grounds of illness. As his messenger was leaving the house Confucius took up his guitar and strummed a song so that he could hear.

[ 19 ]

Tsai Yü inquired whether the three years' period of mourning was not too long. If the perfect gentleman fails to follow the rites for three years, they would certainly fall to ruin. If he has no music for three years, it too would certainly crumble. Let the period of mourning be terminated once the grain cribs have been emptied and filled and the rounds made of the various woods used to make fire, i.e., one year. The Master answered him, "Would you feel secure, after only one year, to eat that rice of yours and wear those silks?"

"Yes."

"Well, if you feel secure, do so. But when the

perfect gentleman is in mourning, he does not find good food to his liking; he is not happy on hearing music; he is not satisfied with his normal abode. Hence he does none of these things. Today, however, if you feel secure, go ahead and do them."

When he had gone the Master said, "Tsai Yü is not manhood at its best. Since it is only after three years that a child quits the bosom of its parents, the three years' period of mourning is general throughout the world. Was Tsai Yü loved by his parents for three years?"

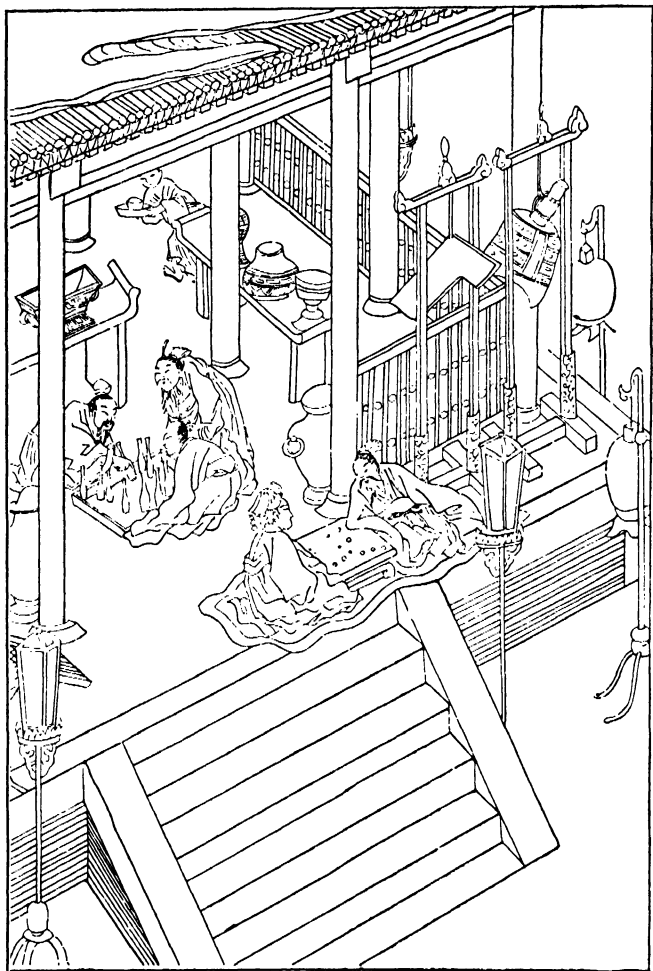
## [ 20 ]

"To eat one's full all day long without directing the mind to anything is, indeed, to be in difficulties! Even those who spend all their time at intricate games are to be reckoned of higher caliber."

## [ 21 ]

Chung Yu inquired, "Does the perfect gentleman esteem courage?"

"The perfect gentleman is given to justice and assigns to it first place. If the perfect gentleman possesses courage but not justice, there will be disorders. In the case of the mean man, there will be burglaries."



“Even those who spend all their time at intricate games  
 . . . ” [Chapter 17, verse 20]

## [ 22 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u inquired, "Are there really persons whom the perfect gentleman dislikes?"

"Yes. He dislikes those who divulge the faults of others. He dislikes those who, being of low condition, malign their superiors. He dislikes the courageous who do not follow the rites. He dislikes those of little intelligence who react without thinking. But you, Tuan-mu Tz'u, do you too have some persons you dislike?"

"I dislike those who think transcription is knowledge; who think non-compliance is courage; who think tale-bearing is uprightness."

## [ 23 ]

"Only women and the mean men are hard to have around the house. If you become close to them, they turn non-compliant. If you keep them at a distance, they turn resentful."

## [ 24 ]

"It is all over for the man of forty who is held in aversion."

# Chapter 18

## THE VISCOUNT OF WEI . . .

### [ 1 ]

Under the Yin dynasty the Viscount of Wei left the capital; the Viscount of Chi was enslaved; Pikan was put to death because he remonstrated with the king. 'This is why Confucius said one day, "Under the Yin there were three examples of manhood at its best."

### [ 2 ]

Chan Huo was three times deposed from his position in charge of the prison, so somebody said to him, "Can't you yet make up your mind to leave the state?"

"If I am to serve men uprightly, where could I

go and not be deposed three times? If I am to serve men dishonestly, why must I leave my native state?"

## [ 3 ]

As he was awaiting Confucius, Duke Ching of Ch'i remarked, "I can't receive him with the same protocol as that used for a member of the Chi family of Lu. I will treat him as falling in honor between the Chi and Meng families." Later, the duke's remark was, "I am too old to undertake the reforms. I can't use him." Confucius then left.

## [ 4 ]

When those in Ch'i sent the dancing-girls to Lu, Chi-sun Ssu accepted them, and for three days no court was held. Confucius then left.

## [ 5 ]

Lu T'ung, the madman of Ch'u, sang as he passed by Confucius, "O phoenix, how high moral conduct has declined! Yet 'tis not right to remonstrate about what has passed; the future is still to be overtaken. But things are as they are, and those who operate the government today are dangerous." Confucius got out of his carriage and wished to speak with



him. But the man fled quickly away, so that he did not succeed in conversing with him.

[ 6 ]

While Ch'ang-chü and Chieh-ni were tilling together Confucius passed by and had Chung Yu ask them where the fording place was. Ch'ang-chü inquired, "Who is that fingering the reins?"

"It's Confucius."

"Do you mean Confucius of Lu?"

"Yes."

"He knows the fording place." He then inquired of Chieh-ni, who replied, "Who are you?"

"I'm Chung Yu."

"Are you a pupil of Confucius of Lu?"

"Yes."

"Flowing on and on, the whole world is like you. And who is going to change it? Instead of following in the suite of a gentleman who flees from men wouldn't you do better to join with those who flee the world completely and live as hermits?" And he went on hoeing without stopping.

Chung Yu then left and reported. Confucius replied sadly, "We can't be one with the birds and beasts. And if I don't join with the wanderers, with whom shall I join? If the world were following The

Right Way, I should not be doing my part to reform it."

## [ 7 ]

As Chung Yu was traveling with Confucius, he fell behind and met with an old man who was carrying a basket over his shoulder by means of a staff. He inquired of the old man, "Have you seen the Master?"

"You're a man who does no physical work and you can't tell one kind of grain from another. Who is your master?" Then setting down his staff, he pulled some weeds, and Chung Yu stood politely with his hands joined.

He kept Chung Yu with him for the night; killed a chicken and prepared some millet for food; and introduced to him his two sons. The following day, Chung Yu departed and reported the matter. The Master said, "He was a hermit." And he had Chung Yu return for a visit with him. But when he arrived, the hermit had disappeared.

Thereupon Chung Yu spoke as follows: "To fail to serve in the government is not right. Just as the restraints of maturity and youth must be preserved, so must also the right relation between prince and subject be maintained. Desire to maintain one's

own personal integrity can lead to the disruption of a greater principle. The perfect gentleman takes office in the government; he does what is right. But it has long been known that The Right Way is not being followed."

[ 8 ]

The following lived as private citizens: Po-i, Shu-ch'i, Yü Chung, I-i, Chu Chang, Chan Huo, and Shao-lien. The Master remarked of them, "Po-i and Shu-ch'i did not flinch in their resolution; their integrity was never impaired." Of Chan Huo and Shao-lien he said that there had been flinching in resolution and impairment of integrity, but it simply was that they were men who spoke in accord with high principles and acted in keeping with their concerns. He said of Yü Chung and I-i that they lived privately and remained silent; they maintained a personal integrity and their retreats from public office were in keeping with prevailing conditions. And he continued, "I am different from these men. I accept life as it comes."

[ 9 ]

The Grand Musician of Lu, Chih, left and went to Ch'i; the one who played at the second meal of

the day, Kan, went to Ch'u; the one who played at the third, Liao, went to Ts'ai; the fourth, Ch'üeh, went to Ch'in. The drum-beater, Fang-shu, went north of the river; the twirler of the hand-drum, Wu, went down into the valley of the Han river; the Assistant Musician, Yang, and Hsiang, who played the stones, went out to the sea.

## [ 10 ]

The Duke of Chou once said to the Duke of Lu, "The prince does not neglect the members of his family; he does not let the chief ministers become resentful because they are not consulted. He does not reject his old friends except for serious reasons. He does not expect one individual to be capable of all things."

## [ 11 ]

Under the Chou there were eight gentlemen, four sets of twins by one mother: Po-ta, Po-kuo, Chung-tu, Chung-hu, Shu-yeh, Shu-hsia, Chi-sui, and Chi-kua.

# Chapter 19

CHUAN-SUN SHIH . . .

[ 1 ]

Chuan-sun Shih said, "I certainly give full approval to the gentleman who in the face of peril offers his life; who, when about to acquire something, thinks of right; who keeps respect in mind as he sacrifices, and grief, as he mourns."

[ 2 ]

Chuan-sun Shih said, "How are we to evaluate the man who, while maintaining high moral conduct, does not expand the sphere of its action; or the man who, having put his faith in The Right Way, is not sincere?"

[ 3 ]

Pu Shang's pupils asked Chuan-sun Shih about the formation of friendships, so he asked them, "What does Pu Shang say on the subject?"

"He says, 'Make friendships with those you approve, and reject those whom you disapprove.' "

"That's different from what I was taught. The perfect gentleman, although giving his respect to men of the highest caliber, maintains a proper regard for all. While reserving his praises for the more competent, he is compassionate toward the less capable. If I am a great man of the highest caliber, there is no one toward whom I am unable to maintain a proper regard. If I am not a man of the highest caliber, others will reject me. Thus, there must be no rejection of others."

[ 4 ]

Pu Shang said, "Even the lesser doctrines contain something instructive for us, but over the long pull I fear that they will leave us in the lurch. Hence the perfect gentleman does not practice them."

[ 5 ]

Pu Shang said, "He who is daily conscious of his lacks and every month checks to see that he is neglecting none of his abilities—that man is indeed fond of learning."

## [ 6 ]

Pu Shang said, "Remain sincere in purpose while studying widely, and keep on thinking while posing frank and open questions. Therein lies manhood at its best."

## [ 7 ]

Pu Shang said, "Just as artisans abide in the market place to ply their trades, so the perfect gentleman studies to improve his doctrine."

## [ 8 ]

Pu Shang said, "The mean man always glosses over his own faults."

## [ 9 ]

Pu Shang said, "There are three facets to the perfect gentleman. Looked at from a distance he seems stern; at close range he is pleasant; as we listen to his words they are clear-cut."

## [ 10 ]

Pu Shang said, "The perfect gentleman does not

work a people until he has won their confidence, otherwise they will feel that he is being severe with them. He does not remonstrate with a superior until he has won his confidence, otherwise he will feel that he is being maligned."

## [ 11 ]

Pu Shang said, "Who keeps strictly within bounds when high moral conduct is of great importance may waver in cases where it is of lesser importance."

## [ 12 ]

Yen Yen said, "Pu Shang's pupils know how to sprinkle and sweep, how to answer questions, and how to enter and withdraw. But these are mere details; they are totally lacking in the fundamentals. What can we do with them?"

When this was reported to Pu Shang, he replied, "Yen Yen is mistaken! The way of the perfect gentleman can be taught to a man too soon, so that later he tires of it. People are of different types, just like plants and trees. In the way of the perfect gentleman there must be no bluffing. Only the sage possesses it in its entirety!"



[ 13 ]

Pu Shang said, "If there is any spare time while holding office, let it be given to study. If there is any spare time while studying, let it be given to holding office."

[ 14 ]

Chung Yu said, "Let mourning stop with a full expression of our grief."

[ 15 ]

Chung Yu said, "Chuan-sun Shih is a friend of mine. He is capable of many difficult things, but he is not yet manhood at its best."

[ 16 ]

Tseng Ts'an said, "Chuan-sun Shih makes a fine impression, but it is hard to achieve manhood at its best along with him."

[ 17 ]

Tseng Ts'an said, "I once heard it said by the Master that even if a man had never yet done a thing wholeheartedly, he must do so at the death of a parent."

## [ 18 ]

Tseng Ts'an said, "In regard to the filial piety of Chung-sun Su I once heard the Master say that with one exception it would be possible for others to equal it. However, he made no changes either in his father's ministers or in his policies. This would be hard for another to equal."

## [ 19 ]

When the Mengs put Yang Fu in charge of the prison, he asked Tseng Ts'an how he should administer the post. "Since our rulers have lost contact with The Right Way, the people have been astray for a long time. If you succeed in feeling things as they do, you will have compassion for those in your prison. You shall take no joy in their punishment."

## [ 20 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u said, "King Chou of the Yin dynasty was not so black as he has been painted, so the perfect gentleman shuns low company for fear that all the evils of the world will be imputed to him."

## [ 21 ]

Tuan-mu Tz'u said, "The faults of the perfect gentleman may be compared to eclipses of the sun and moon. While they are being committed everybody sees them, but once he changes everybody gazes up at him in respect."

## [ 22 ]

Kung-sun Ch'ao of Wei asked Tuan-mu Tz'u, "Under whom did Confucius study?"

"Before the ways of Kings Wen and Wu of our Chou dynasty had fallen to the ground, here among men those of the highest caliber knew the important principles and those of a lower caliber knew the lesser matters. Nobody failed to know some aspect of the ways of Kings Wen and Wu. So, the Master did his studying of anybody and everybody. He did not have any regular teacher."

## [ 23 ]

Shu-sun Chou-ch'ou said to the grand gentlemen at court, "Tuan-mu Tz'u is of higher caliber than Confucius." When Tzu-fu Ho reported this to Tuan-mu Tz'u, he replied, "Let me adopt for comparison a dwelling with its surrounding wall. The

wall around my house is shoulder high, so that anybody can look over and see its good points. The Master's is several eights of feet high. Unless one enters by the gate, it is impossible to see the beauties of the ancestral temple, the richness of all the attendants. And at times there are indeed few who reach the gate! The gentleman's remarks are completely out of place!"

## [ 24 ]

When Shu-sun Chou-ch'ou spoke badly of Confucius, Tuan-mu Tz'u replied, "There are no grounds for that. One may not speak badly of Confucius. The excellences of others may be compared to the hills and mounds over which it is still possible to pass. Confucius, however, is both the sun and the moon; and over these we cannot pass. Even though a man should cut himself off from them, what harm would he be doing to the sun and the moon? He would merely display far and wide his own ignorance of proportions."

## [ 25 ]

Ch'en K'ang said to Tuan-mu Tz'u, "You are too modest. Confucius wasn't of higher caliber than you!"

“Just as the perfect gentleman may be considered wise because of some one word, so, because of some one word, one may be considered ignorant. Our inability to reach the pinnacle occupied by the Master may be compared to our inability to reach the sky by stairs. If the Master had been in charge of a state or a household, the situation would have been such that what he would establish was straightway established; when he would lead into The Right Way, there was immediately movement in that direction; when he wished to bring tranquility, it came straightway; when he organized a movement, all acted in one accord. His life was a source of glorification; his death, of grief. So how can we attain to the pinnacle which he occupies?”

# Chapter 20

YAO SPOKE . . .

[ 1 ]

The Sage-King Yao spoke thus: "This do I declare to you, Shun. Heaven has set its finger upon you; long may you keep it there. To the end of the world may Heaven's rewards to you be everlasting." On the same note Shun commanded Yü.

It has also been said, "Child that I am, I, T'ang of the Yin dynasty, make bold to sacrifice a black bull. I make bold to declare to the august departed emperors: 'The guilty I dare not pardon. As the emperors' servant I do not act in secret; the decree resides in the hearts of the emperors. If I personally prove guilty, it is not to be imputed to all. Rather, if the others have guilt, the blame is to be imputed to me.'"

Also, "Let the Chou dynasty flourish, and may the good be enriched thereby. Though there may be Chou relatives, it is best to use an individual who is manhood at its best. Then if the people come to have faults, the blame can be imputed to their ruler. Give careful attention to weights and measures; examine the laws and regulations; restore offices which have been abolished. Thereby the administration of the world will be set in motion. Restore states which have been destroyed; see that the broken family lines are re-established; raise to position men who have been neglected. Thereby the people of the world will turn to you. Hold of high importance the people, stocks of food, mourning for the departed, as also the sacrifices to them. If you are indulgent, you will win the mass. If you are truthful, the people will put their confidence in you. If you are diligent, you will be successful. If you consider only the public interest, there will be contentment."

## [ 2 ]

Chuan-sun Shih inquired, "What must be done to prepare oneself for service in the government?"

"Esteem the five high qualities, and avoid the four evils, then you can serve in the government."

"What are the five high qualities?"

"The perfect gentleman is kind without causing expense. He can get work out of people without making them resentful. He has desires, but he is not greedy. He is dignified, but not proud. He inspires awe, but he is not savage."

"What do you mean by the first of these?"

"To treat as advantageous what the people find advantageous, isn't this showing kindness without payment? If we put to work only those who can properly be put to work, who will be resentful? If a man, out of desire for manhood at its best, achieves it, how can he be greedy? The perfect gentleman, without regard to quantity and size, is not slothful—isn't that to be dignified but not proud? The perfect gentleman keeps his clothes and hat straight and his glances respectful. And because of his seriousness, people feel a reverence as they look up at him—isn't this to inspire awe without being savage?"

"What are the four evils?"

"To put to death without having instructed: this is cruelty. To expect accomplishment when there has been no warning: this is outrageousness. To insist upon a particular date when the order has been to proceed slowly: this is brigandage. To pretend a gift, but to be ungenerous in its payment: this is pettiness."





Confucius

[ 3 ]

“Who fails to recognize fate can never become a perfect gentleman. Who fails to follow the rites can never play his proper rôle. Who does not know the value of words will never come to understand men.”



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